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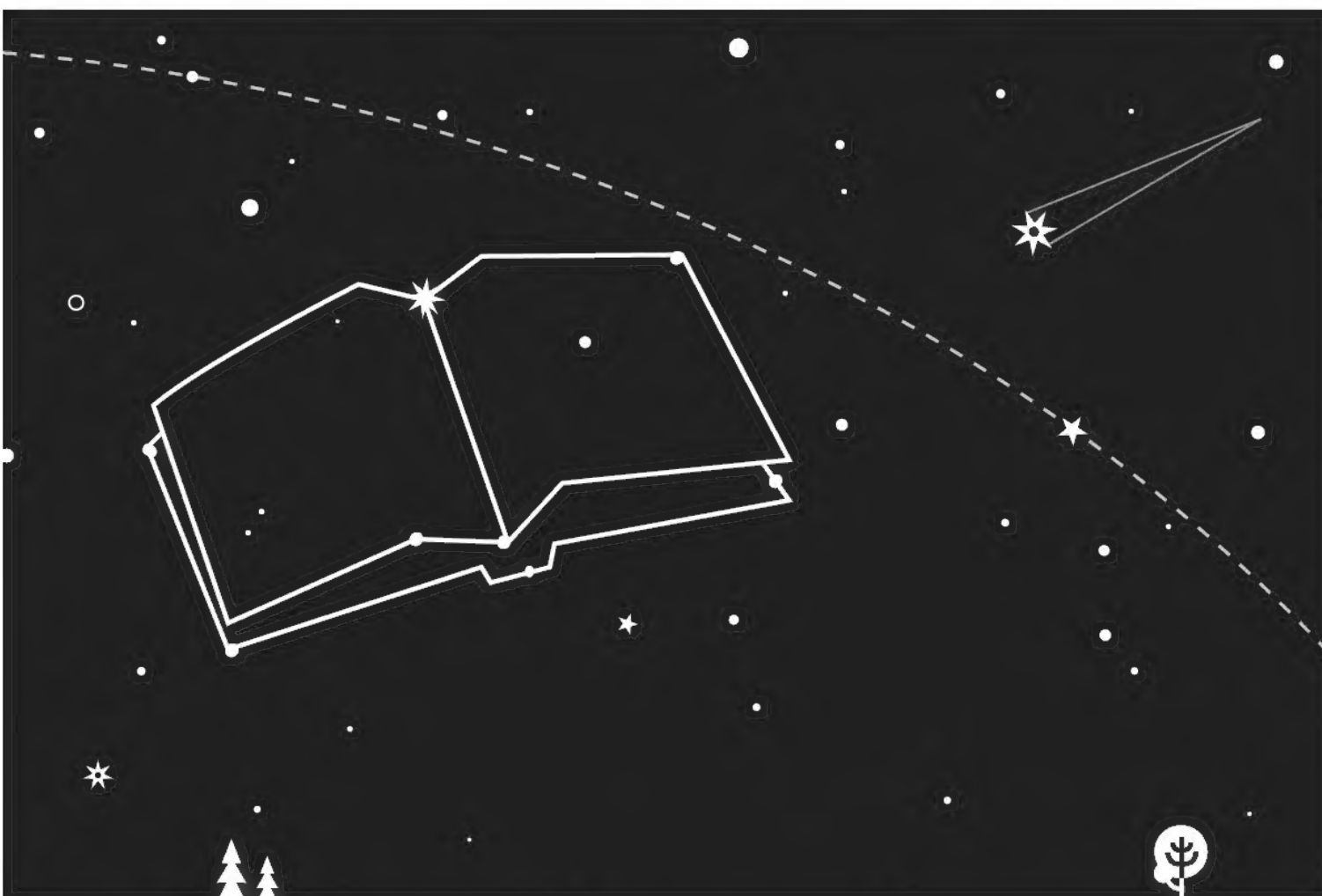
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Believe it or not, we're all trapped in the closet, yeah up in the closet



NINA
VARSAVA

Gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual: we're obsessed with sexual identities. The absurdity of our obsession is concealed by language, which makes categories of sexual identity seem reasonable, even essential. But these categories obscure what's really going on; they fail to capture the diversity and fluidity of sexuality. Judith Butler, a feminist and queer theorist, writes about the overly-simplistic and restrictive nature of sexual identity categories. When someone "comes out" as gay, she explains, that person enters a whole new closet, full of secrets and limitations.

Hardly anyone is simply gay or straight. These categories divide people along imaginary lines. Consider "Gerald and Geraldine," for example: they've been monogamous for several years, and have sex together almost every night. But maybe Gerald fantasizes about Brad Pitt, and perhaps Geraldine is having an affair with her female colleague. Or maybe Gerald and Geraldine have only ever engaged in heterosexual acts and have only ever had heterosexual fantasies—however unlikely that may be. But the possibility for a homosexual "slip" is always open.

Maybe Geraldine has never considered lesbian sex because she's always been sure she's heterosexual. But Gerald proposes a threesome, and Geraldine acquiesces to please him. During this sexual encounter, she discovers that women turn her on too—or that women turn her on *more* than men. So she breaks up with Gerald and decides to have sex only with women from now

on. This doesn't necessarily mean that Geraldine has become a homosexual: the only person who can accurately be named a strict homosexual or heterosexual is the person who dies without having ever wavered in sexual orientation; and once this person is dead, she or he cannot attest to this.

We have a compulsive desire to figure people out, and we think that sexually identifying people enables us to do so. But when we force people into sexual categories, we take control of their identities away from them. And when we submit to these categories ourselves, we lose control over our own identities. The moment I'm seen as a heterosexual woman, all my actions are interpreted according to that identity: I touch another woman and it's an act of caring, of friendship; I touch a man and it's flirtation, it's sexual. People depend on my sexual identity to make sense of everything I do.

These categories have a self-fulfilling prophesy. A man who has identified himself as heterosexual all his life may repress homosexual urges, convincing himself that these urges are impossible considering his heterosexuality. If he acts on a homosexual urge, he risks his (much valued) identity, so he's likely to act on his homosexual desires covertly—or not at all. In this way, categories of sexual identity work to keep homosexuality and heterosexuality distinct.

Instead, we should work towards exposing the categories of homosexual and heterosexual as the extreme ends

"We have a compulsive desire to figure people out, and we think that sexually identifying people enables us to do so. But when we force people into sexual categories, we take control of their identities away from them. And when we submit to these categories ourselves, we lose control over our own identities."

of a continuum with infinite possibilities in between. Of course, the idea of a sexual continuum isn't new. Alfred Kinsey, conducting extensive sexual surveys in the 1940s and '50s, numbered individuals on a continuum: zero signified exclusively heterosexual, and six signified exclusively homosexual. However, the continuum never caught on in everyday use: we don't tend to wonder what number so-and-so is, we tend to wonder if so-and-so is gay or straight. These numbers were practical for Kinsey, but just as sexuality can't be captured in a dichotomy, it can't be captured in segments either.

We should resist identification within categories of sexuality and the attachment we have to these categories as adjectives to describe people. By embracing the notion of an infinite, unsegmented scale of sexuality, we acknowledge and exemplify sexual fluidity. This way, a sexual being can slide back and forth on the scale as she or he pleases, without worrying about adhering to some boxed-in sexual identity. We should talk openly of the limitless sexual practices and fantasies that someone with an undefined sexuality can embrace. Then all those people fixated on sexual categories might see what they're missing.

By refusing to fit sexualities into neat boxes, we can begin to challenge that expectation. This, of course, will be awkward at first, and will make people uncomfortable. Unfortunately, social change is rarely convenient—but it can be incredibly sexy.

LETTERS • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

I sincerely hope that the *Gateway* staff does not allow such nauseating aberrations to appear in future issues of what is otherwise an enjoyable publication.

STACI RHOINMORN
Science IV

Mental illness is no joke

When 30 000-plus university students take a couple days off school it's understandably a topic of conversation. It's a weekend to relax, to catch up on homework, or to get to the ski hill for the first time this winter.

One thing it's not is "suicide prevention break." I witnessed this phrase arise in multiple settings last week completely independent of one another. The least appropriate of which was a professor reminding us not to attend the seminar. Laughter and smiles were the response to each discussion of the aforementioned holiday.

Depression, and mental health issues in general, are not a laughing matter. Students struggling with their mental health are far more common than an unaffected individual might think. Many people facing the challenge of depression don't want the world to know about it and can go about life without anyone ever finding out. For this reason there is no group of people with whom it is appropriate to make jokes about suicide.

Clinically depressed students face the everyday challenges of university life accompanied by fragile self-worth,

reduced ability to stay focused, low motivation and poor sleep quality, among other very real symptoms. Nothing is less encouraging to someone trying to overcome these obstacles than the failure of their peers to acknowledge the reality that people are actually in their situation. By pretending that depression is not a real issue you may easily be crushing someone and reversing their healing process without even knowing it.

I am certain that no one on campus meant any ill by referring to the Remembrance Day holidays as "suicide prevention break." But for the sake of the many affected individuals it would be best to lay this name to rest.

JOSH KRABBE
Engineering Physics III

Letters to the editor should be dropped off at room 3-04 of the Students' Union Building, sent via carrier owl or e-mailed to letters@gateway.ualberta.ca.

The Gateway reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity, and to refuse publication of any letter it deems racist, sexist, libellous or otherwise hateful in nature. The Gateway also reserves the right to publish letters online.

Letters to the editor should be no longer than 350 words, and should include the author's name, program, year of study and student identification number to be considered for publication.

Furthermore, e-mails featuring excessive amounts of exclamation marks, all caps, large font sizes, and emoticons, are liable to be ridiculed mercilessly by the editorial staff.

LETTERS FROM THE ARCHIVES

Canadian flag proposed

I have no doubt that you have often read in the different newspapers of Canada suggestions of a Canadian national flag. As you are aware, this country of ours is a young nation within the British Empire, and the only nation without a flag, so to speak, and this is the reason I am writing to you to try to get the University of Alberta to be the first to have the national flag of Canada.

The colours of the University are green and gold. Wouldn't it be nice if the flag had a green background? The Union Jack in the top left hand corner and the gold maple leaf in the bottom right hand corner. It would not only represent the University but would take in all of Canada. The green would represent the green fresh fields, the gold maple leaf would take in the golden wheat, the backbone of the country, and represent the whole nation. The maple leaf is worn by her Majesty the Queen and our fighting forces and why not have it for our national flag?

Every true born Canadian should wear a maple leaf and be proud for everyone to see it, as I have fought for this country.

ARTHUR LETHEM
25 March, 1941

Winter in Canada: icy-hot holiday or seasonal nuisance?

'Tis the season for merriment, cheer and ripping downhill on GTs



JOEL
TIEDEMANN

point

Besides frigid temperatures, anarchy on the streets and having to shovel snow, winter is pretty damn cool. Let's face it; winter is Canadian like bathing in a tub full of maple syrup with a beaver while watching a hockey game in an igloo. With this in mind, Canadians and other snow-bound countries have developed several methods of effectively dealing with the winter months and making them quite enjoyable. This adaptation makes perfect sense: we live in a country that is covered in the pillowy white stuff for six or seven months out of the year, so we may as well embrace it.

For starters, let's consider tobogganing. As a child (and later as a drunk adolescent), I would bundle up, grab my GT Snow Racer or Crazy Carpet and spend hours sliding down snowy hills. For such a simple activity, sledding provided me with hours of free, exhilarating entertainment. I know that I'm not the only one who's enjoyed the thrills associated with tobogganing, as sliding down hills in a completely wild and out-of-control manner is a rite of passage for most Canadian children. Another perk of tobogganing: coming home to steaming cup of hot chocolate filled with marshmallows. This warms the cockles of the heart like nothing else.

Two other awesome winter activities involving hills and sliding are skiing and snowboarding. Like many others, the rush I get from racing

down a mountain at Mach 3 is so intense that I'm usually counting down the days until the summer months are over. The sheer pleasure derived from skiing and snowboarding outweighs any potential headaches brought on during the icier season.

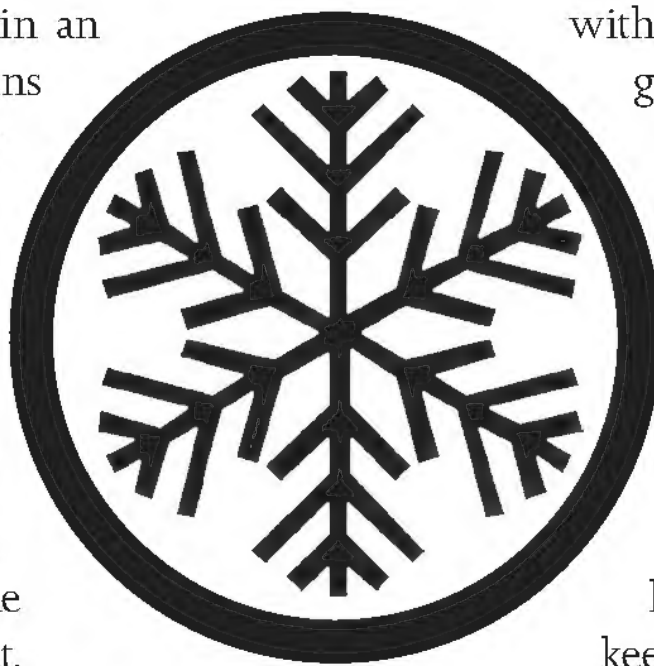
But let's step away for a moment from such intensive activities and reflect upon the intangible benefits provided by the winter months. Think about the sheer beauty of winter: a lone spruce tree blanketed in a coat of fresh snow reminds us of the stunning landscapes that can be found in Mother Nature. And opening presents on Christmas morning would be filled

with emptiness if I wasn't able to gaze out the window and see the world covered in pure, white, powdery snow.

Winter isn't so bad. Aside from all of the mushy, Christmassy feelings, we're also provided with many fringe benefits. During the frigid winter months, we no longer need a refrigerator too keep our beer cold; the world is our beer fridge. Along with cold beer, winter

also provides us with respite from summertime annoyances such as mosquitoes. That's right: for seven wonderful months, there's no buzzing, no stinging and no itchy lumps. This winter thing just keeps on getting better and better.

In fact, winter rocks. So people who chose to live in a country known for its prolonged periods of frosty weather should embrace it, not complain about it. Perhaps those individuals who find it necessary to berate the Old Man should consider paying a visit to a more southern locale. For them, the frozen arctic tundra that is Canada may not be ideal. Although Canadians are not the igloo-bound individuals that we are sometimes perceived to be, we have adapted in ways that actually make the winter season pretty damn awesome.



The sooner the snow melts, the sooner I can quit shovelling



CONAL
PIERSE

counterpoint

I woke up the other day to discover that some form of cold white solid had covered all of outdoors. After doing some research and chemical analysis involving the adding of maple syrup to said substance, I have come to the conclusion that winter is upon us. I'm not really a fan of this whole winter jive: as far as I'm concerned, on days when I'm not tobogganing or skiing, snow can just fuck right off.

Outside of advertisements, winter hasn't been magical or special in any way since we were kids. When we were younger, winter meant hot chocolate and snowball fights. Nowadays, pegging off a stranger with a snowball isn't considered an innocent jest, but aggravated assault. And apparently giving a girl a face full of wet snow is no longer an acceptable means of conveying your affection. Basically, winter died for me the day I realized that no matter how cold I get, a handsome scoundrel is not going to come along and tuck me into the warm belly of a Tauntaun.

Probably one of the worst things about winter is how so many people suddenly forget how to fucking drive. Look, I understand that you should reduce your speed and be more cautious when there's ice on the road, but when the only snow around is on the sidewalks, you need to speed the fuck up. Snow isn't exactly sneaky. It's not sitting there on the sidewalk waiting for the opportune

moment to jump out under your wheels.

Now Joel, I'm willing to give you skiing as a legitimately rad thing you can do during winter, but in case you haven't noticed, unless you want to drive four hours or more, there's no decent outlet to do this. And fuck anyone who wants to say Rabbit Hill or Snow Valley. Waiting in line for half an hour just so you can go on a minute-long run (and that's if you're snow-plowing the entire way down) leaves you feeling like you've ejaculated prematurely. When you factor in the fact that you can't go five meters without overhearing some

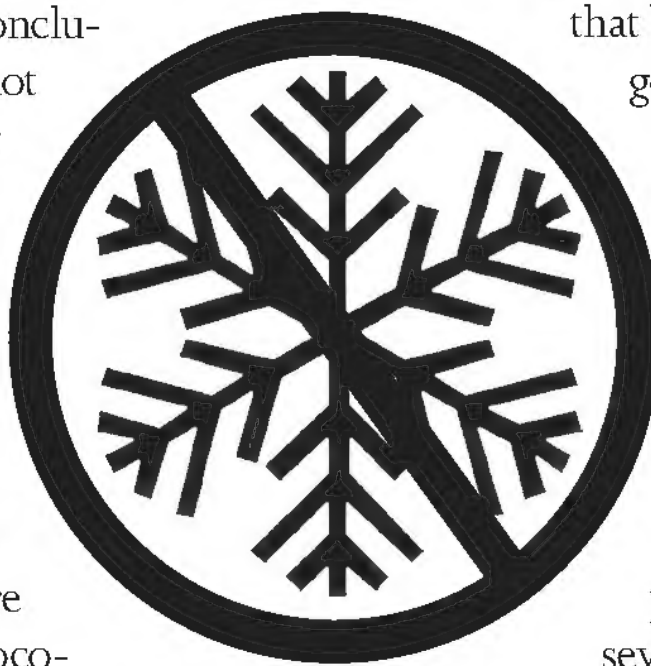
homs talking about how they'd "totally bone that broad in the pink" or how they are

going to "get some mad wicked air that'll be totally fresh," sitting at home and playing Scrabble suddenly seems riveting.

The worst thing about winter is the macho bullshit attitude that being Canadian somehow makes you impervious to cold. It's fine if you don't want to complain about it, but don't act like sewing a Canadian flag to your backpack means you are a part of a superhuman

race so hearty that they were breast-fed ice cream. Wearing shorts in -20C weather doesn't make you more of a man; in fact, if you were to check downstairs you'd get a picture reminiscent of how your package looked when you were eight.

In the end, all winter is really about is being cold and miserable. There's no silver lining to this cloud, and no matter how much you love your '80s ski wear, the end doesn't justify the means. When you look past all your fantasies about what winter meant for you as a kid, you'll realize that you were being ripped off by the old lady next door who paid you to shovel her walk. Two dollars to shovel your entire driveway, you cheap bitch? I'm eight, not retarded. I have a good mind to go ice your steps.





Buck Wild

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My Sister Ocean

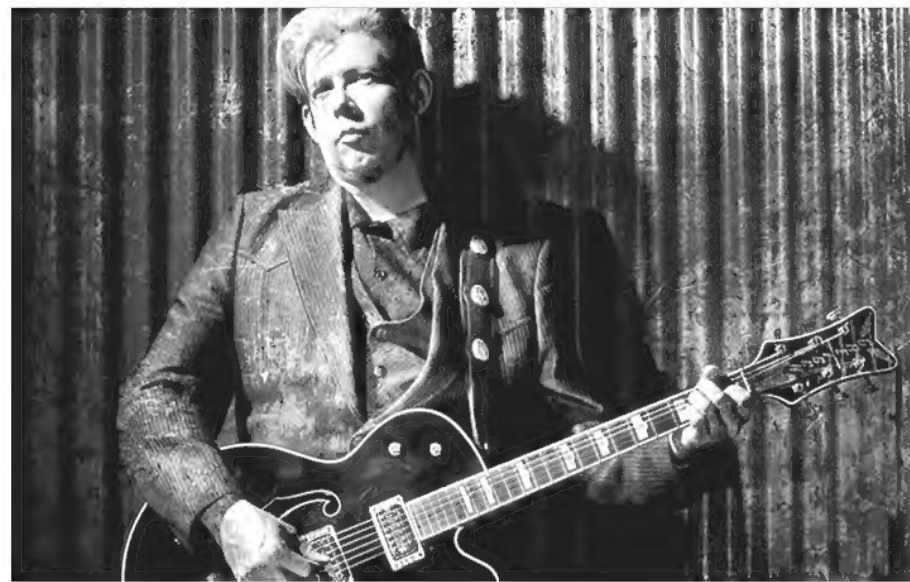
With Portal and Superbeing
Friday, 17 November at 9pm
Sidetrack Café
\$7 at door

A duo featuring only bass and drums, self-proclaimed “alt-pop punk rock” provocateurs My Sister Ocean are back at the Sidetrack this week for a second round after releasing their CD *Beautiful Failures* there earlier this summer. The band says that the album’s title was inspired by Orlando Bloom’s character in Cameron Crowe’s film *Elizabethtown*, ironically, a movie that, while featuring visually appealing cinematography and a cast worthy of *People* magazine, ended up being a box-office bomb.

Kool Keith

With Kutmasta Kurt and Weezil
Sunday, 19 November at 8pm
Starlite Room, 18+
Tickets at door

The only man who can take on Diddy as king of alternative monikers, Kool Keith brings his underground hip-hop to the surface this Sunday. Known separately as Dr Octagon, Dr Doom, Rhythm X and Mr Gerbik, Keith has been part of several projects in his days on the hip-hop scene. Known as a major player in the revitalization of the genre, Keith has begun a revolution with such classic releases as *Spankmaster* and *Dr Octagonecologist*, the latter noted for its loose raps and inventive skits filled with non-sequiturs, a linguistic element this entertainment writer knows nothing about.



Big John Bates and the Voodoo Dollz

With The Igniters and The B Movies
Tuesday, 21 November at 9pm
Sidetrack Café
\$10 at door

As any feminist would tell you, it’s crucial to refer to women as dolls when describing modern burlesque troupes. The high-profile Pussycat Dolls (the burlesque ensemble, not the pop group) helped pioneer this rejuvenation in the art of theatrical striptease and the Voodoo Dollz continue their legacy, even adding a Z to increase their flair. They dance to the vibes of Vancouver rocker Big John Bates’ swaggering rockabilly swing, creating a spectacle that both Brian Setzer and Gloria Steinem could enjoy.

Jim Byrnes

Wednesday, 22 November at 9pm
Sidetrack Café
\$12 advance, \$15 at door

After nearly 25 years in the television and music industries, St Louis native Jim Byrnes would have quite a story to tell. Well-toured in Canada and having defeated Bryan Adams in 1996 for a coveted Juno, Byrnes is once again bringing his folksy blues rock across a nation that loved him enough to shun our own country’s golden boy. But perhaps we Canucks should be wary. On his new album, *House of Refuge*, Byrnes has a song about meeting Che Guevara, a somewhat popular communist, in a dream. As well, Byrnes not long ago provided the voice for the French mayor of Paris in the TV movie *Madeline*. These signs point to only one possible conclusion: blues musicians in the US are trying to subvert Canadian freedom.

JOHN KMECH
Sounds the same on the phone



Fawning and fussing

Raising The Fawn has had its share of brouhahas, but things are finally starting to tone down

Raising The Fawn

With In-Flight Saffey and Mico
Thursday, 16 November at 8pm
The Powerplant

PAUL BLINOV
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Raising The Fawn is a band fraught with frequent changes. The atmospheric-rock trio is in the middle of a Canada-wide tour promoting their latest album, *The Maginot Line*. The fourth release in the band’s almost decade-long career, it features the most stable lineup the band has seen. But even now, there’s still the occasional misstep.

“We’re a little bit behind schedule getting in. If [my phone] cuts out, just call the number back,” John Crossingham instructs over a crackling cellphone. But Crossingham is used to setbacks; the early years of Raising the Fawn were filled with them.

Originally Crossingham’s one-man band, Raising the Fawn has gone through a multitude of band members since 1997 in order to arrive at their final cast: Crossingham on vocals and guitar, long-time collaborator Scott Remila on bass and keys and Dylan Green rounding it all out with percussion. For now, though, Crossingham seems very comfortable pushing forward with this particular musical combination.

“Over the past couple of years, it’s been the same band, so by now it feels like a band. But it took a while for it to get settled,” Crossingham explains. “There were a few times I thought we had the band, but then it sort of fell out from underneath us. It took a lot of perseverance and sticking to our guns. But once it came together, I think we knew we felt that this [lineup] was going to stick for a while, and it has.

“It feels pretty good,” he continues. “I think

we communicate pretty well, and I think that the three of us understand how to fit together as a group and not tread on each other’s toes. There’s a lot of space to work with, so it’s pretty easy.”

But before the final roster had gelled solid, Crossingham was attempting to pull together a band to tour Raising the Fawn’s second album, *The North Sea*. However, due to the lack of a stable group of musicians to tour with, the album went unreleased for some time.

“There were a few times I thought we had the band, but then it sort of fell out from underneath us. It took a lot of perseverance and sticking to our guns. But once it came together, I think we knew we felt that this [lineup] was going to stick for a while, and it has.”

JOHN CROSSINGHAM

“*The North Sea* didn’t actually take a longer time to write and record—it just took longer for it to get released,” Crossingham says, thinking back on the chaotic time. “The members leaving really slowed it down. [Recording company] Sonic Unyon didn’t want to release the record without a band to tour it.”

The North Sea finally found release in 2004, and during the ensuing tour—where Green joined up as a drummer—Raising the Fawn became the band they are now. Crossingham seems genuinely excited about their new release, *The Maginot Line*,

for it’s finally become a carefully crafted product of all three band members—not just him.

“In some ways, I feel like *The Maginot Line* took a lot longer to write than *North Sea*, just because we were taking a longer time writing as a group,” Crossingham says. “The songs were having to go through three sets of brains instead of one primarily, at least in their gestation.”

And Crossingham seems surprisingly fine with sharing the songwriting dues with his bandmates, considering that Raising the Fawn is his brainchild.

“There were some days when I was more resistant than others,” Crossingham muses. “But for the most part, it was just a matter of allowing that songwriting to come together as a band instead of just sort of myself. So the more that I personally make way for it, the more Scott and Dylan fill up that space.”

It’s worth noting that, while Raising the Fawn is Crossingham’s current focus, he also plays guitar in the acclaimed indie melting pot/band, Broken Social Scene. But juggling Raising the Fawn with such a beloved, significantly more well-known act has actually turned out pretty well, according to Crossingham.

“I’m missing a big tour that [Broken Social Scene] is doing down in the States,” Crossingham laments. “But other than that, I really haven’t missed much activity with them. Our touring schedules have overlapped with the spaces, so it hasn’t been too difficult to work. They fit together surprisingly well, so it’s not as difficult as it sounds from the outside.”

On the exterior, it appears that Crossingham has seen some pretty unstable days with Raising the Fawn, but he doesn’t seem to care now that things have finally begun to fall into place.

“Right when you called, I got a Yahtzee on my hand-held game,” he laughs. “Everything works out in the end, I guess.”

Aladdin rubs the wrong way

Aladdin: The Magical Family Musical

Directed by Ted Dykstra
Starring Jamie McKnight, Bret "The Hitman" Hart and Jennifer Dale
Runs until 19 November
Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium

AMANDA ASH
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Oh, Disney. Despite your somewhat flaky contributions to the current animated world, or your capital-hungry theme parks that steal money out of the hands of cotton-candy loving children, you should still be praised, for your colourful genius is evident when it's placed in contrast with some of the rather cretinous childrens productions that are being produced.

Surely there are other adaptations of *Aladdin*, that magical Middle-Eastern classic, that don't quite meet the expectations of the fantastical film we all remember from our youth. But for now, *Aladdin: The Magical Family Musical* is the one that stands out as the epitome of adaptation disasters.

The musical is nothing like the *Aladdin* that involves a hilariously comedic Genie, an exotic magic carpet ride between a poor boy and a beautiful princess, or a grotesque and captive transformation of an evil villain. In fact, the musical *Aladdin*—including the music—really has nothing at all to do with the movie, except that the main character's name is Aladdin, and the backdrop is a stereotypical Middle Eastern setting, which is confusing, since the production theoretically takes place in Edmonton.

The premise of the musical is as follows: there's a lazy boy named Aladdin (Jamie McKnight) who spends his days skateboarding with his skater friends (and yes, the song "Skater Boi" is sung), he falls in love with Princess Jacuzzi (played by Rhoslynn Bugay, and yes, she's referred to as "bubbly") and is tricked into retrieving a magic lamp by his evil uncle (Ross Petty), which houses



the muscular Genie (Bret Hart).

Really, there's not much of a storyline to *Aladdin*, if there even is one at all, for the brunt of the play is spent making horribly clichéd jokes that often fly over the heads of kidlets but send a wave of embarrassment through the adults. And to top it all off, after every pun and quip, there's the annoying drum roll/cymbal crash.

Unruly references abound, and a plethora of groan-worthy Top 40 songs (from Shania Twain's "Any Man Of Mine" to Steppenwolf's obvious "Magic Carpet Ride") soak the performance in a bitter marinade that only the theatrically uncouth could stomach. Of course, one must take into account the fact that *Aladdin* is for the kids, aiming to season them in the ways of pop-culture and classy sophistication itself, but when the play begins criticizing the occupation of acting as a good-for-nothing pastime, it seems that the production's goal simply collapses in on itself.

If there's one thing that could be expected from *Aladdin*, it's a scene involving Bret Hart doing some sort of wrestling move. But the surprising thing about this conjecture—which, by the way, is a correct assumption—is that it ends up being the only enjoyable moment of the entire musical. The Genie (better known as Bret "The Hitman" Hart) trumps the evil uncle by taking him on in a wrestling ring, performing his signature move "The Sharpshooter." If it wasn't for that, audiences—or what was left of the spectators after intermission—would have slid all the way off of their chairs from utter boredom.

Kids' productions, even for University students, can be entertaining (think *Spongebob Square Pants* or *Veggie Tales*), but in the case of *Aladdin: The Family Musical*, save your time and money and stay at home. There, at least, you can pop in the old VHS of *Aladdin* and sing along to "A Whole New World."



FICTION:

This baby is going to grow up meddling with dark magic, spreading the Wiccan word with profuse gestures and articulate speeches.

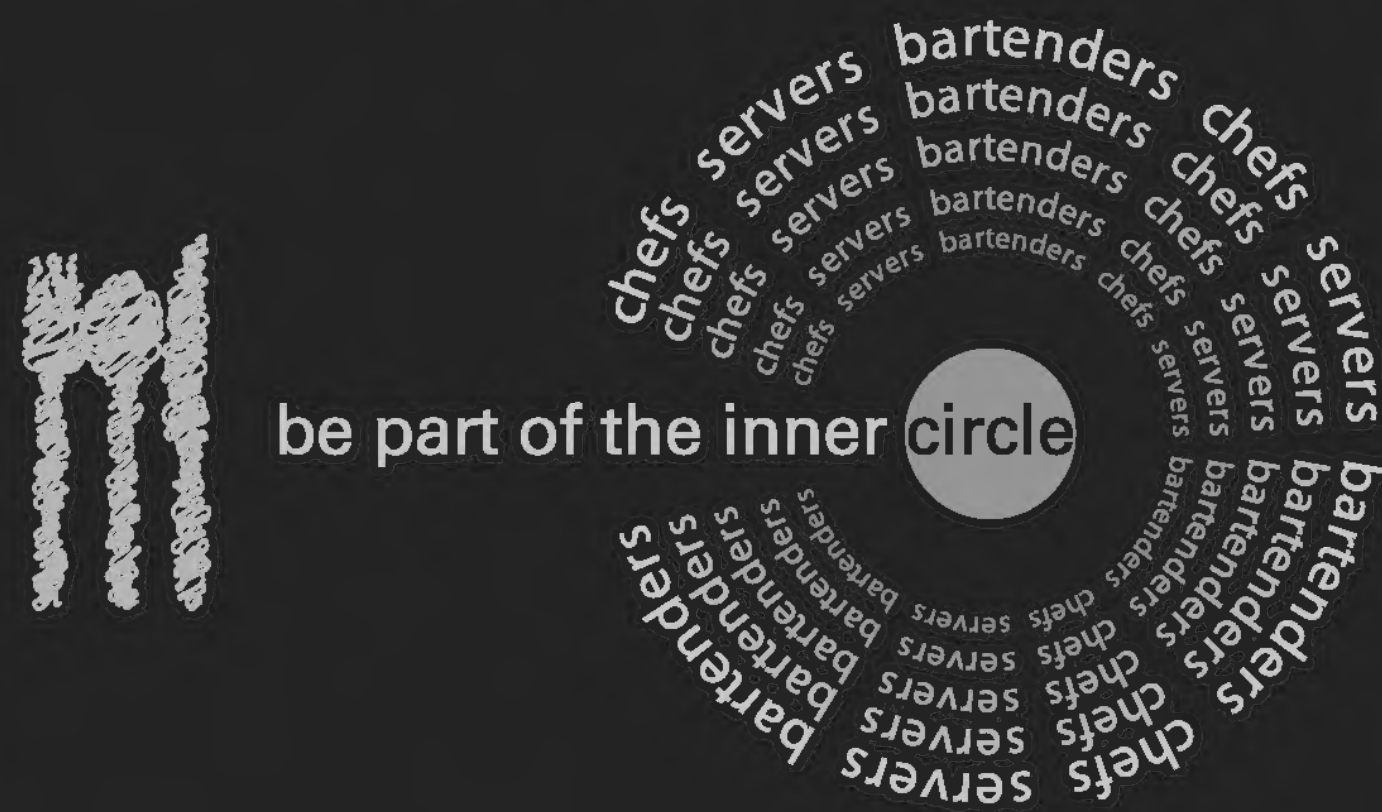
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Babel

Directed by Alejandro González Iñárritu
Starring Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett
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CARLA KAVINTA
Arts & Entertainment Writer

In Biblical times, Noah's descendents built the Tower of Babel as a stairway to heaven, hoping to reach its eternal glory and euphoria. However, the builders became profusely preoccupied with the tower, neglecting to worship God himself. Because of this ignorance, God punished them by creating different languages, so nobody could understand each other. From this brief history lesson, we can see the appropriateness of the title of Pitt's new powerful drama, *Babel*, as it illustrates the severe consequences of simple misunderstandings and miscommunications.

Iñárritu, whose previous works include *21 Grams* and *September 11*, cleverly links four stories, each set in a different country: Mexico, Japan, Morocco and the US. The intellectual and emotional stimulation begins as an elderly and disheveled villager sells a rifle to a near-by family in the middle of the Moroccan desert. As the

young boys of the family toy with the new rifle, they aimlessly shoot at an American tour bus, hitting one of the passengers (Cate Blanchett). What was thought to be innocent target practice escalates into a torrent of events impacting lives around the globe.

Although many rifts arise due to the inability to understand each others' languages, the characters all feel the same pain and loneliness.

Structured much like last year's Oscar-winning *Crash*, *Babel* successfully shows the universality of emotions, regardless of race or culture, reminding us that we are all connected. Although many rifts arise due to the inability to understand each others' languages, the characters all feel the same pain and loneliness.

Adding to this element of frailty are the explicit sexual moments throughout the film. From a curious young boy in Morocco to a feisty teenage girl in Japan, *Babel* forces us to

acknowledge our most basic drives. Initially, the scenes leave the audience feeling uncomfortable and confused. However, by the end of the film, a connection is made and yet another aspect of humanity is revealed.

As the film jumps from one story to the next, we become progressively empathetic toward the characters. The collaboration of gut-wrenching performances by Pitt and Blanchett alongside the honesty and intensity of the lesser-known actors creates an atmosphere that is almost too real. Amidst the unconstrained performances are incredible visual stimuli, including the barren North African desert and the buzz and bright lights of Tokyo.

Iñárritu leaves us with a satisfying and authentic ending, which reaches no resolution. Staying true to the film's sense of realism, the ending is far from perfect. Relationships are left wavering, the futures of many characters are left dangling and many other loose ends are left to our own interpretation.

Just as the builders were brought down to earth, *Babel* affirms our own mortality, serving as a unique and refreshing example of meaningful filmmaking. With intertwining plot lines, sharp acting and remarkable visuals, *Babel* is an experience that should not be missed.



*Copier not exactly as shown.

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Digging in the sky for diamonds

Skydiggers go back to the basics and try to harvest their 'moments'

Skydiggers

With AA Sound System and James Murdoch Band
Sunday, 19 November at 6pm
The Powerplant

SHAUN MCMULLEN
Arts & Entertainment Writer

You can't really accuse Skydiggers of doing it the easy way. After nearly two decades of record-company trauma, marathon tours, getting the Most Promising Artist Juno and still trying to remain relevant, the story of Skydiggers is as rich and compelling as their music. Country-tinged songs of heartache and joy like "I Will Give You Everything" and "Slow Burnin' Fire" have earned them the kind of loyal following you don't get without a challenge.

"Things have changed and morphed considerably in the whole 'biz' of recording and promoting records. It's kind of gone back to where it all started in the very early days of just trying to reach fans," says bassist Ron Macey, over the phone from Toronto. "You go in and play and hope that the word of mouth will stimulate interest in the band, and a few people come back the next time and then you sell a few records ... I still think that the best thing to do is for a band to get up and get in the truck and drive and go play in order reach people that way."

Not that touring is the only means of promoting themselves. Apart from being in Skydiggers, the members of the band have other pursuits—including running their own label, MapleMusic Recordings.

"Andy [Maize], our singer, he actually works at Maple during the day," Macey continues. "And Josh [Finlayson], our guitar player, he's busy writing with a number of people, and he's down in Nashville a lot working on tunes and working the publishing angle and what have you."

But despite the fact that the members have going concerns outside the band, they still find the time to be, well, Skydiggers. Earlier this year, the band

released an album in collaboration with long-time friends and one-time bandmates, The Cash Brothers, and the whole process of recording and doing shows with them is one that Macey recalls with fondness.

"There's certainly a long history, musically and friendship-wise, with the Cash Brothers," Macey explains. "Pete [Cash], he was one of our original members, and he some years ago left the band and went out and was recording and doing shows with his brother Andrew [Cash], and many years ago our singer, Andy Maize, he used to sing backup with Andrew, so there's this real sort of cross pollination."

"Things have changed and morphed considerably in the whole 'biz' of recording and promoting records. It's kind of gone back to where it all started in the very early days of just trying to reach fans."

RON MACEY

"Basically, [Skydiggers and the Cash Brothers] went into a studio in Toronto called Monumental Sound and just spent a weekend tracking things pretty much live ... we were just trying to capture a moment," Macey continues.

And capturing a moment isn't easy, especially when it means changing with the times and thus shifting your appearance—like when guitarist Josh Finlayson pseudo-shaved his beard.

"He never got rid of it completely," Macey laughs. "There have been times where he's been all fresh faced again, but he's been inching it back for years. That really big ZZ Top beard—that pretty much disappeared in the '90s."

"The next time we drive through Beardmore, Ontario, it'd be a good time for a shave," Macey concludes.



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NEAL WILDING

WHO IS THAT MASKED WOMAN? The Bicycles manipulate gender roles at The Third Space.

Ferrell flick takes a serious look at literature

Stranger Than Fiction

Directed by Marc Forster
Starring Will Ferrell, Emma Thompson
and Dustin Hoffman
Empire Theatres
Now Playing

ELIZABETH VAIL
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Every author aims to make their characters come alive. To this end, a writer will imbue his or her cast with history, with family, with authenticity, and tie them down with tics and flaws and human pettiness. Some even jokingly admit that, sometimes, their characters can get carried away with themselves. Well, what if one actually did?

Harold Crick (Will Ferrell) is, by all accounts, an exceedingly boring character. A senior agent for the IRS, he measures his entire life with numbers (how many toothbrush strokes per tooth, how many steps per staircase, how many seconds it takes to knot a tie), which add up and make for an unexceptional and lonely life—that is, until he starts hearing the voice of a woman narrating his life, down to the last minute detail and errant thought.

The narrator comes and goes, often speaking out at embarrassing moments and articulating Harold's private longings and fantasies. Even more disturbing, he eventually overhears the narrator reveal his impending death. Frantic, he consults a professor of literature (a wry Dustin Hoffman) in hopes of discovering who this supposed author of his life is and in what



type of story he's become entangled.

Meanwhile, reclusive writer Karen Eiffel (Emma Thompson, smoking like a chimney) is weathering a massive case of writer's block. Pressured by her publishers, her assistant Penny (Queen Latifa) and the success of her previous novels, she burns through packs of cigarettes and reams of paper, fantasizing about the various ways a person can die (falling off a building, crashing a car off a bridge, pneumonia), but all for nothing. Her next novel's overdue, and she has yet to find the perfect way to kill off her main character, one Harold Crick.

The exact reason for the whole phenomena is never explained, which is to the benefit of this delightfully weird and surprisingly literate film. The best aspects of this movie are the questions brought up by the fact that Ms Eiffel's supposedly fictional creation is very real. What are the bounds of literary ethics in this instance? Is her narration simply the observer of events, or their unwitting instigator? Has this happened before, with her previous eight novels and their main characters?

Will Ferrell's physically bland features served him well in *Elf*—where they and his height made

his man-child elfin upbringing a hilarious contrast—and in *Talladega Nights*—where they reinforced Ricky Bobby's parody of All-American-Man charm—and they're used to excellent effect. Under-acting with an almost complete lack of verbal humour, his performance is subtle, genuine and endearing. Emma Thompson, marvellous as a red-eyed, unkempt, greasy-haired author who spends most of the film in a housecoat, conclusively puts that tired cat-eyeglasses-and-apple-martini cliché of female writers to rest. As an anarchist baker who's audited and then wooed

by Harold, Maggie Gyllenhaal is also a pleasure to watch, a fiery and sensual woman who ignites Harold's imagination.

Stranger Than Fiction wrestles with a number of common Hollywood themes (living life to the fullest, freedom of thought, narrative stereotypes), all of them connected by the creative central conceit of an ordinary life in narration. But without spoiling the ending—which is a bit doozy—it suffices to say that *Stranger Than Fiction* is significantly stranger, funnier and smarter than most of the cinematic fiction out there right now.

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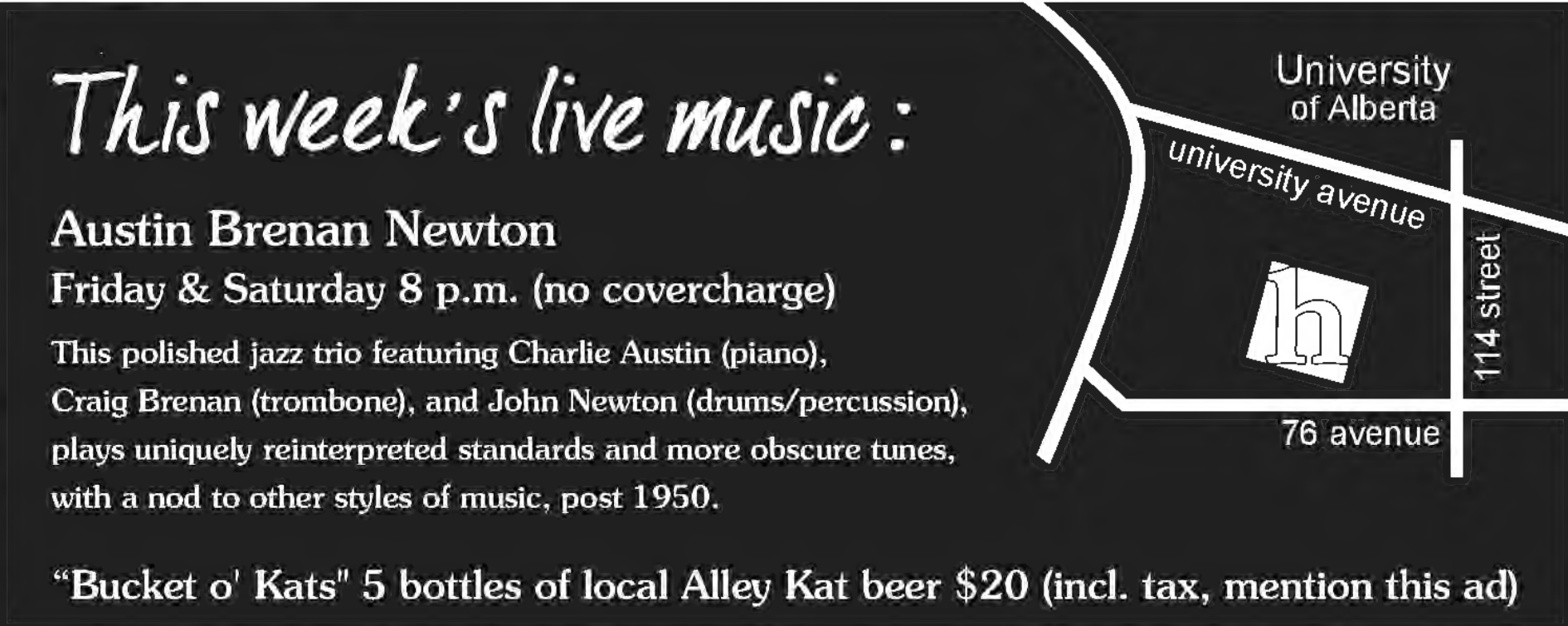
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Senghor sur la violence: dialogue

Polarisation politique

OMAYRA A. ISSA
Rédactrice en Chef

Pour ceux du Campus Saint-Jean qui sont attentifs aux annonces, il y aura une rencontre sur l'anti-violence qui s'étendra du 15 au 17 novembre 2006. Le but d'un tel évènement étant de permettre des discussions, réflexions et concertations entre universitaires sur les thèmes de la violence et de l'anti-violence dans le monde d'aujourd'hui. Qu'il y a t-il de plus viscéralement actuel que des questions qui cherchent à comprendre la source de la brutalité humaine ? Alors que le Canada se souvient de ses soldats qui sont morts pendant les deux guerres mondiales, que la guerre contre le ter-

rorisme sème la confusion dans biens des esprits, qu'une mère réfugiée du Soudan pleure encore son fils tué à *Red Light Lounge*, la question est, peut-on sortir de ce cercle périlleux ? Il faut dire que cette question est dans sa nature même violente puisqu'elle requiert une remise en question fondamentale de celui qui la pose.

Rien ne sert de le répéter : l'intense globalisme que nous vivons de nos jours et qui permet les rencontres des peuples et leurs interconnexions nous met face au défi essentiel d'une reconsidération de nos rapports à autrui. Il s'agit de favoriser une paix entre les civilisations comme antithèse au clash des civilisations que certains idéologues constatent. C'est dans ce

sens que Léopold Sédar Senghor dont les francophones du monde entier célèbre les cent ans cette année, appelait à l'ouverture des esprits. Le rapport que Senghor entretient avec nous de nos jours est simple. Il nous apprend la nécessité du dialogue. Un dialogue qui si effectif aura pour mérite d'atténuer les angoisses économiques, sociales et politiques de notre monde. C'est aussi dans cette veine que l'équipe du Miroir et du Gateway vous propose la deuxième édition du Miroir. En espérant refléter une névralgie de rencontres, d'amalgames, de développement de maintes accents, maintes histoires, et de maintes francophonies, je vous souhaite une belle lecture.

JARED MILNE
Opinion

Le propos récent de Michael Igantieff, candidat à la course de la chefferie du Parti libéral du Canada, de reconnaître le Québec comme une « nation » au sein du Canada a suscité de vives controverses au sein de son parti. Plusieurs Libéraux craignent de rouvrir les discussions constitutionnelles des années 1980 et 1990, qui selon plusieurs ont presque déchiré le pays. Stéphane Dion et Bob Rae, deux des grands rivaux à la course, s'opposent à entreprendre des discussions de cette nature maintenant. Depuis l'époque de Pierre Trudeau, beaucoup de Libéraux se sont opposés à une reconnaissance constitutionnelle du Québec, ce qui serait une étape nécessaire à cette province comme nation.

Cette situation est très révélatrice de l'état courant de la politique canadienne. Trudeau a durement lutté contre la reconnaissance du Québec comme nation indépendante, ce qui était le but de l'Accord du Lac Meech dans les années 1980. Il était si critique de ceux qui appuyait la reconnaissance du Québec, ou même la négociation avec ce dernier, que Tommy Douglas, le « Greatest Canadian » et son adversaire au niveau fédéral, disait que Trudeau accusait tous ceux qui voulaient prendre ce chemin d'être des séparatistes.

Encore aujourd'hui, la pensée trudeauiste est extrêmement forte dans le Parti libéral. Il semblerait qu'en critiquant l'approche trudeauiste au Québec, on risque d'être mis sur une liste noire. Dion et Rae ont tous deux sévèrement critiqué les actions de Trudeau en s'opposant à l'Accord du Lac Meech, et en appuyant la reconnaissance du Québec, mais est-ce qu'ils se sentent à l'aise de le dire aussi ouvertement? Est-ce qu'ils peuvent librement exprimer leurs opinions sans être accusé d'être des séparatistes par les

partisans trudeauistes?

Malheureusement, les attitudes semblent être polarisés. Soit vous êtes pour l'approche trudeauiste, soit vous êtes souverainiste. Ce triste phénomène ne se limite pas au Québec : on peut le voir chez les Autochtones et dans les relations entre le gouvernement fédéral et les provinces aussi.

Les Autochtones ont pendant longtemps tenté de faire connaître aux autres Canadiens leurs perspectives et leurs désirs de s'autogouverner.

Si on défend l'autogouvernance autochtone, on risque d'être accusé de promouvoir la ségrégation et un gouvernement raciste. Si on défend le Canada des Autochtones, on risque d'être accusé de promouvoir la colonisation ou l'oppression. Dans les deux cas, c'est énormément difficile de trouver un juste milieu pour réconcilier les deux côtés.

C'est un peu la même chose avec les disputes entre Ottawa et les provinces, comme Terre-Neuve ou Alberta. Si on défend la perspective d'Ottawa, on est accusé d'ignorer ou de nier complètement les griefs des provinces. Si on appuie les provinces, on est accusé d'avoir une perspective de clocher, et de ne pas vouloir aider le reste du Canada. Il faut appuyer soit Ottawa, soit la province, sans pouvoir de trouver un compromis.

Ceci n'est pas la manière dont le Canada a été fondé. Le Canada a été fondé sur le compromis et la conciliation, non pas sur les actions de ligne dure et le refus de compromis. Comment pouvons-nous résoudre les problèmes si on craint les accusations d'un côté ou l'autre dans un débat? Tristement, ceci semble être la manière dont la politique est menée maintenant : Soit vous êtes partisan d'un côté et rejetez l'autre, soit vous êtes de l'autre et rejetez le premier. Il n'y a pas de réconciliation ou de satisfaction mutuelle...et souvent ceci ne fait qu'envenimer les relations entre les Canadiens et rendent toujours plus amères les débats.

Sommes-nous étrangers à nous-mêmes?

Babel

Realisé par Alejandro González Iñárritu

ROMAIN CHAREYRON
Arts et Spectacles

« Car la langue est un crayon qui presse assez profondément (en bien ou en mal) pour écrire sur le cœur ».

Cette citation trouve un écho particulier dans Babel, le nouveau film d'Alejandro González Inárritu (Amours chiennes, 21 grammes) puisque le langage y est une donnée hautement problématique, le récit faisant de la solitude et de l'absence de communication ses thématiques principales. En reprenant la structure narrative kaléidoscopique de ses deux précédents opus, le réalisateur nous montre comment des êtres que tout sépare se trouvent liés, sans même le savoir, du fait d'un incident qui va à jamais changer leurs destins. En nous transportant du désert marocain à Tokyo, ou de San Diego à la frontière mexicaine, nous nous trouvons face à un tableau assez désenchanté de la condition humaine, mettant en avant l'impossibilité à communiquer

qui semble gangrené chaque jour d'avantage nos rapports aux autres. Les barrières qui se dressent entre les personnages sont multiples : langage, sentiments, géographie...les retranchant dans leurs doutes et leurs douleurs, chacun d'entre eux transportant en lui ses rêves oubliés, ses espoirs déçus et ses vies gâchées. Les protagonistes semblent animés par ce même désir, profondément humain, de vouloir se (re)trouver dans l'Autre et s'y réfugier, mais au lieu de cela, c'est à la froide réalité qu'ils se heurtent et se blessent. On se frôle, on se touche, mais l'on reste irrémédiablement seuls, comme l'illustre parfaitement la scène dans une discothèque de Tokyo.

À l'image de ses personnages, le film sait se faire peu bavard, évitant toute surenchère psychologique ou explicative et sachant faire passer l'émotion à travers des procédés purement cinématographiques. Les gros-plans sur les visages en sont l'illustration parfaite, laissant ainsi s'échapper d'un regard plus d'humanité et de fragilité que les mots ne pourraient le faire. Il en va de même pour la magnifique bande-son qui offre des trouvées dans le récit, lais-

sant alors à la musique le soin d'écrire l'histoire. On note d'ailleurs une maîtrise plus affirmée de la part du réalisateur quant à la mise en scène et la construction du récit. La frénésie des deux films précédents a laissé la place à des moments plus contemplatifs où le film touche au cœur des êtres et le récit gagne en maturité.

Mais ce constat sur l'éternel incommunicabilité entre les êtres et les peuples se double ici d'une réflexion beaucoup plus contemporaine sur la violence dans notre société qui donne au récit toute sa singularité. En abordant des thèmes d'actualité tels que l'immigration clandestine, les attentats, le suicide ou bien la déshumanisation qui sévit au cœur des mégapoles, le film nous plonge dans un chaos qui ne connaît pas de frontières et dont chacun de nous est la victime potentielle.

Enfin et surtout, comme l'indique la dédicace finale, le cœur du film bat au rythme de l'enfance. Une enfance meurtrie et prise au piège d'un monde implacable mais qui en constitue la survie et allume des lueurs d'espoir dans le noir de la nuit.

Vous rappelez-vous des dinosaures? Les asteroides? C'est notre tour!

JESSIKA PAQUET
Chronique préhistorique

L'ère des reptiles s'est arrêté abruptement il y a 65 millions d'années. Heureux dénouement pour nous, les mammifères! La cause possible : un énorme météorite aurait percuté notre planète. Ces énormes bombes sont plus fréquentes qu'on peut bien le penser. Cinq grandes périodes d'extinction massive sur la Terre concordent chacune avec l'impact d'un tueur planétaire. À quand notre tour?

En 1994, la comète Shoemaker entra en collision avec Jupiter créant des boules de feu de la grosseur de la Terre. Cet événement rappelle la vulnérabilité de notre

planète et la réelle menace de ces impacts. C'est pourquoi certaines organisations, comme Spaceguard Foundation, scrutent le ciel à la recherche de météorites pouvant croiser notre orbite. Tout près de nous, la ceinture d'astéroïdes dénombre 400 000 blocs ayant un diamètre de plus de 1km et 5 000 de plus de 15km. Le plus gros météorite, Cérès, a 1001 km de diamètre, soit un peu moins que la distance entre Edmonton et Winnipeg! D'autres astéroïdes ou comètes sont nombreux à nous menacer. Plusieurs dates sont déjà fixées quand à de prochaines proximités d'avec des astéroïdes. En 2027, 1999 AN10 de 1km de large sera aussi proche de la Terre que notre Lune suivi de 1997 XF11 en

2028 qui sera 2 fois plus gros, mais passera deux fois plus loin que son prédécesseur. Plusieurs autres visites sont à l'horaire dont un impact en 2880 par 1950 DA d'un km de diamètre. Cependant, il est utopique d'imaginer que nous sommes capables de prévoir toutes futures menaces. En 2002, un astéroïde de 120m de diamètre est passé à seulement un tiers de la distance qui nous sépare de la Lune. Il n'a été découvert que 3 jours après son passage alors qu'il s'éloignait de la Terre.

Plus d'un an après, un météore de 10 m a frôlé la Terre à seulement un cinquième de la distance Terre-Lune et n'a été repéré que le lendemain de son passage. Cette visite résulta d'impact avec une météorite

en Inde qui détruisit plusieurs habitations. Les diamètres des astéroïdes peuvent sembler dérisoires, mais le météore qui aurait exterminé les dinosaures n'avait seulement que dix km de large et son impact, situé au Golf du Mexique, aurait tué toute forme de vie dans un périmètre allant jusqu'à 500 km et aurait provoqué des vagues gigantesques et des réactions en chaîne de volcanisme et de séisme. La quantité de poussière propulsée dans l'atmosphère aurait bloqué la lumière du soleil pendant plusieurs mois abaissant la température globale. Une seule météorite de 5m de diamètre peut dégager une énergie équivalente à Hiroshima! Si la Terre est bombardée par un astéroïde ayant un

diamètre de deux km, cela détruirait une zone de la taille de la France et aurait des dégâts planétaires. Si l'objet tombait dans l'eau, un énorme tsunami dévasterait les côtes sur de longues distances.

Même si l'impact de la Terre avec un astéroïde est inévitable, sa date est incertaine. En vérité, on peut se questionner à savoir qui est le plus dangereux ennemi terrestre : d'énormes masses mobiles provenant de l'univers ou tout simplement l'homme? Certains biologistes annoncent que nous sommes dans la sixième vague d'extinction à cause de l'activité humaine! Certains projettent que d'ici 2050, 50% des espèces auront disparues. Inclurons-nous l'homo sapiens?

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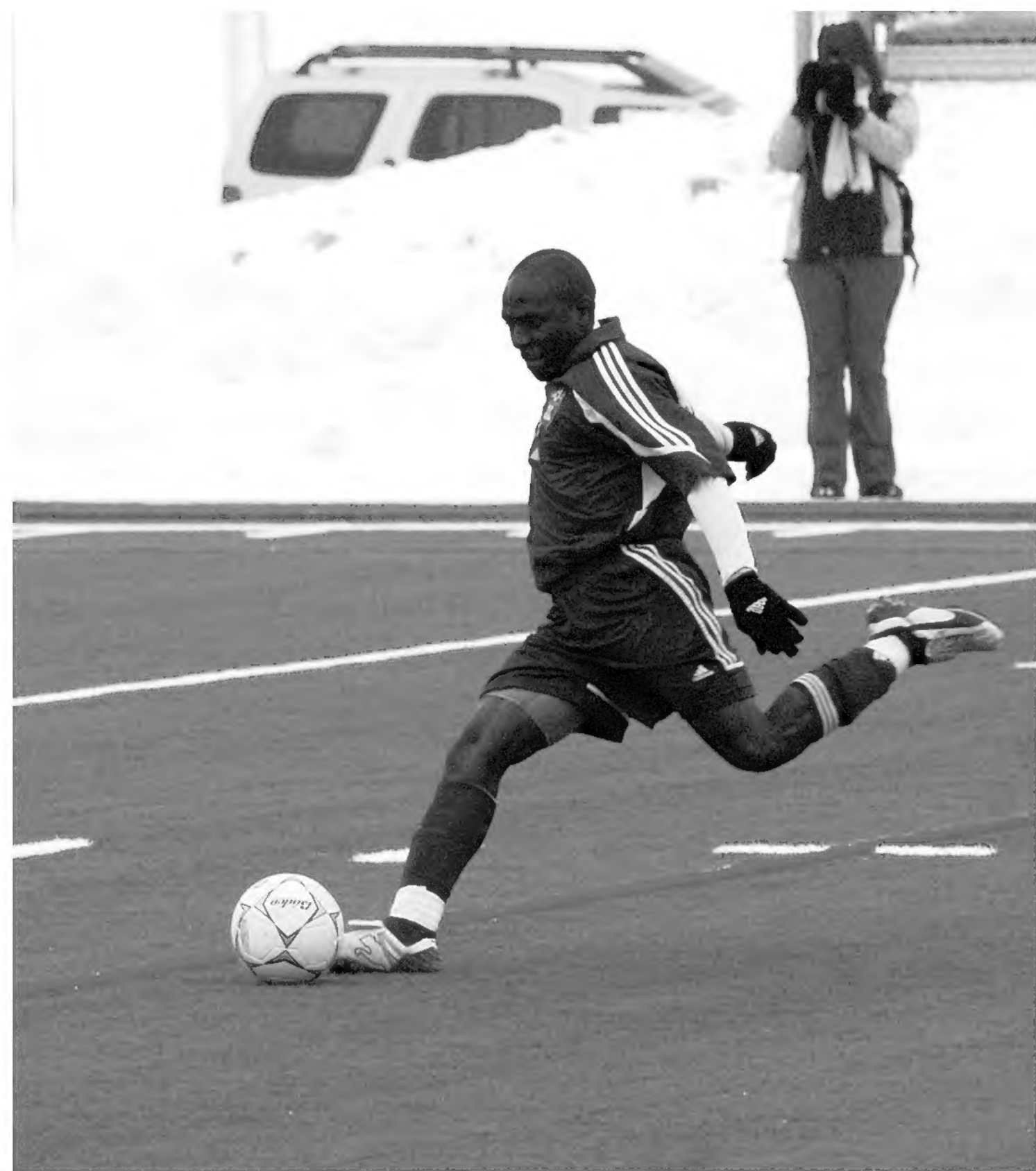
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PHOTOS: LIZ DURDEN

GOLDEN GOAL Fifth-year Bear Hilaire Kamdem (right) blows a free kick past Trinity Western keeper Tyler DeJong (left) for the game-winning goal in the CIS championship final.

Second gold fitting finish for fifth-year Bears

ROSS PRUSAKOWSKI
Sports Staff

Every athlete desires to finish their careers with a gold medal around their neck. The five seniors on the Golden Bears soccer squad got to fulfill that wish this past weekend at Foote Field when they took home the Sam Davidson Memorial Trophy as CIS champions for the second and final time after winning the championship in 2003 as well.

Those fifth-years played a big role in this year's championship run; Hilaire Kamdem scored the only goal of the championship match, and Mark Korthuis was the team's captain and leader throughout the season.

Korthuis, the 2005 Canada West MVP, was forced out of the final game with a groin injury, but was still named a tournament all-star, along with fifth-year defender Jarin Myskiw.

"It was definitely nerve-racking on the bench watching ... I couldn't breathe for the most part after we scored that goal; I just wanted the game to get over with," Korthuis said. "It was disappointing, but in the same respect I knew that [my replacement, Quenton Zalazar] was going come on and do a good job and I had all the faith in my teammates that they were going to get the job done."

Joining Korthuis, Myskiw and Kamdem in winning their second CIS title with the team were defender

Michael Kennedy and injured keeper Devon Fraser. Last year's squad suffered from a lack of experience in missing the playoffs, but the return of Kennedy and Junior Castrillion-Rendon—another member of the 2003 championship team—provided stability and additional maturity for the Bears. It was the experience and mentorship these players brought to the team that Alberta head coach Len Vickery cited as making them championship material.

"They've been absolutely superb in terms of keeping the group together and bringing along the first year players," Vickery said. "Every team has to go through a little bit of adversity, unfortunately we had to go through

the Canada West championship with some. But we protected our confidence; we knew we were a good team ... and brought [that] to the national finals."

As they savored capturing their second and final title on the frozen turf of Foote, the handful of Bears that were part of the championship team three years ago tried to compare the victories.

"I think it's a different feeling for us now because we're fifth-years and we're the leaders on the team," Korthuis said. "We had to take the initiative throughout the year to get the team together and set the tone. It's just as nice, but it hasn't really set in yet."

"It's completely different in that

it's a completely different team, but it's amazing just the same," Kennedy added. "Each is very special memory and this one's totally different because it's the last CIS game that I'll ever be allowed to play and we're walking away with the trophy—it's incredible."

For his part, third-year Bears keeper Daniel Gusberti was savoring his first taste of CIS gold after a stellar performance in the Alberta net during the National Championship. However, despite stealing the starting job after Fraser suffered a serious ankle injury earlier in the year, Gusberti wasn't feeling too sympathetic for his injured fifth-year teammate.

"Nah, I don't feel bad," Gusberti said. "He's already got a championship."

Pandas looking to rebound against pucking sled dogs

NICK FROST
Sports Staff

The last weekend series the Pandas hockey team played doubled as the first weekend series that they didn't sweep. Up until dropping a 4-2 decision to the University of Manitoba Bisons on 3 November—Manitoba's first ever victory against the Pandas in Canada West action—this season's team (7-1-0) has become pretty accustomed to scoring emphatic wins against their conference opposition. This weekend, the Pandas will look to rebound from their first loss, facing-off against the University of Saskatchewan Huskies (5-5-0).

"Well, I think, generally speaking, our team isn't used to losing," head coach Howie Draper admitted. "Anytime we lose, it's a hard thing to take; there's a certain degree of shock that runs down the bench. It's the sign of a good team, though, that can rebound in a positive way, turn things around in their favour and maybe even learn from it. I think that, from what I've seen of the intensity from our team this past week, they're not taking the loss as hard as [they've taken losses in the past. Ultimately, it will help us down the stretch.]"

The team doesn't see the one loss as being a lingering issue, either. Draper explained that despite losing, his team doesn't feel as though it makes them susceptible to losing more games.

"I don't know if we feel any more vulnerable than we did before. The team, in general, feels that we just weren't prepared, and didn't prepare enough for that game," he said.

Because the Pandas didn't see any action this past weekend, they took full advantage of the extra opportunity to work on the fundamentals and regain any focus or intensity that they may have lost two weeks ago.

"We previously had a bye-week just before Manitoba, in which we had, originally, wanted to give them a little bit of a break," Draper said. "As a result, we maybe weren't quite as ready in terms of intensity and preparedness on a competitive level when we got to Manitoba. So this time around, we've changed things a little: we front-end loaded last week with some really heavy work and a little bit more competitive work, just to push them a little bit more physically."

That extra training will be put to the test against the Huskies, a team Alberta hasn't faced yet this year; however, they



FILE PHOTO: KIM SMITH

EAST OR WEST THE GOALS COME EASY Putting the puck in the net hasn't been a problem for the Pandas this year.

won all four meetings last year, shutting them out in their last two outings.

"We're expecting a good team, and they're going to be a little bit more experienced than they were last year," Draper said. "I think the last few games

we played against them last year were very close games. Saskatchewan's got a young team and a fast team; they like to pressure their opposition pretty hard. We're just prepared to try and out energize them and bring more

intensity than they do, similar to what we were trying to do—or should have done—against Manitoba."

The puck drops at Clare Drake Arena this Saturday and Sunday; both start times are scheduled for 7pm.

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RENFREE

point

With the Grey Cup scheduled for Sunday and the National Football League in full swing, there's no better time to strike up a rousing debate about which country boasts a better football league. In one corner is the NFL—a sporting juggernaut that brings in more money each year than most third world countries combined. In the other corner is the seemingly meek Canadian Football League that, while small in comparison to its American counterpart, still produces a better product on the field. It might be tough to see through all the drama and hype that comes as an unwanted side effect to every NFL game like blindness from Viagra, but when you focus on the play itself, it's clear that Canada has the upper hand.

First, the CFL is much easier to watch because the game is quicker. It's one thing for avid fans to sit on a couch all day and watch NFL games plod along, but it's excruciating for the casual fan. Because the NFL has a 40-second play clock, and the CFL's is only 20 seconds, the Canadian game has up to twice as many plays in a 60-minute game, with more actual football, and less huddling and watching the clock tick down. The CFL is like twice the football for half the calories. If the CFL were Subway sandwich, the NFL would be the Filet O' Fish.

The CFL is also a much more offensive game—and I don't mean unpleasant, I mean high-scoring. There are several facets of the Canadian game that make it easier for teams to put points on the board: the extra receiver in the CFL means one more target for quarterbacks

to toss the ball to; the receivers also have more room to run passing routes because the field is longer, wider and the end zones are larger.

In addition to the larger field dimensions and extra player, Canadian teams can send all receivers in motion before the snap whereas the NFL only allows one player to be in motion. This results in more complex crossing patterns that might free up a receiver for a big pass. Mr Phillips may argue that people don't care for the offensive part of the game, but this is North America, not Europe—high scoring is king on this continent.

The third asset Canadian football has over its American cousin is the return game. Canadian rules are set up so that big returns on punts, kickoffs and sometimes even missed field goals happen fairly regularly. Because the NFL has a fair-catch rule, players will often wave the halo over their heads to protect themselves from a bonecrushing hit while killing the chance of a big return.

You don't see players in the NFL like Edmonton's Gizmo Williams who made a career of returning kicks the length of the field. While Phillips may say that interceptions and Hollywood-style production for NFL games is what entices fans, I would rather see a 100-yard punt return any day.

If all of this isn't enough to convince you the Canadian game is better consider this point: the rouge. That precious single point that comes when field goals, or punts in the Golden Bears' case, can't be brought out of the end zone is as Canadian as maple syrup and beavers. It means that a team can win a game on a last-second play by one point on what amounts to simply a botched field goal in the NFL. It's Canadian football at its best. And it's something that can't be matched by anything in American football, not even John Madden spouting off onomopoeias and passing it off as commentary. Take that John Madden.

Oh Renfree, it's not the size that counts, but what you do with it



TREVOR
PHILLIPS

counterpoint

Mr Renfree, my poor, misguided Canadian comrade, you can't honestly think that the CFL is better than the NFL. That's like saying sno-cones are better than slurpees because you can get them in paper cones. Well, they're not, and neither is the CFL.

The major flaw with the CFL is that it's a minor football league. The players that aren't big enough (see your hero Gizmo Williams), fast enough (see Argo John Avery), or are suspended (see Ricky Williams), escape to the 25-year-old Astroturf and sub-million dollar wages after being dismissed from the much more talented and strict NFL. The CFL, like the rouge—that stupid point awarded for futility—is a league that commends suckiness in favour of respectability, and for that they get my thumbs down.

To further demonstrate the CFL's inferiority, I will pose this question to you Andrew: Why do you think the CFL has rules to create more offence? Because they think that ten touchdowns per game is enough to hide the lack of talent and second-rate players that grace their shabby fields. This mentality turns the CFL into a joke because they sell out to the offensive style. Players in motion and three downs to eliminate the run is like having a giant sign blinking that says, "We know we suck but touchdowns are major awesome."

Another thing that's completely useless is the size of the field. The NFL is the one league that didn't listen to the bigger is always better argument. With less room to move and the exceptional speed of the game, players have to be ultimate athletes and make the most of

the sometimes cramped space. The competitors who can't perform get moved to the CFL; there they have ten extra yards to play because they need more space to be more effective. All this does is serve to make the NFL an elite league for athletes and athletic performance.

Returning a punt in the NFL is an example of this. In the NFL it's much harder to do because of the limited space. Since 250lb linebackers hit hard enough to kill, return men deserve a fair catch rule. The CFL goes with the five-yard buffer zone to allow for more return yards in another lame attempt to get more offence.

But if talent, smaller fields and better defences don't sell the NFL, their coverage by national television networks definitely should. It starts with the amazing marketing power of monopolizing an entire day from 10am, when pre-game starts, until 10pm, when post-game finishes. They have four continent-wide networks broadcasting in high-definition with two or three broadcasters at each game to provide in-depth analysis.

But, the most amazing thing that separates the NFL from the CFL is the sheer visual image on screen. Take for example a game in Cincinnati, with the 50 000 plus in attendance, the Orange and Black covering the field and amazing action on it. It's like watching a three-hour action movie with an unpredictable plot line. That's why I choose my NFL Sunday Ticket over Friday Night Football.

It's a shame Mr Renfree. For the last few years the CFL has really grown within this nation and even started to garner some international attention. But with the collapse of the Ottawa franchise, the Ricky Williams distraction and, in some ways, the ending of the Eskimos streak, the league has really taken a step back this year. I would love to see a day when the NFL's worst go against the CFL's best in a battle for football respect. But until that day comes, you'll find me flipping between CBS and FOX on Sundays, not falling asleep in front of the CBC.

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START THE QUEEN The Bears are the champions for the fourth time in school history.

Mother inspires Kamdem's gold medal performance

CHAMPIONS ♦ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

This was the fourth time Trinity Western and Alberta had met on the soccer pitch this season in an increasingly bitter rivalry between the interprovincial squads. The first two bouts ended up in 2-2 and 1-1 draws respectively, and in the third match the boys from Langley beat Alberta 2-0 in the Canada West playoffs. The rivalry came to a head Sunday as the game was littered with fouls—30 in total—and yellow cards (six) as Alberta looked to avenge the previous week's loss and take the national title.

"We didn't worry too much about losing the Canada West title," Bears head coach Len Vickery said. "In hindsight we ended up benefiting from the losses in the Canada West Championship because we came together as a team."

"We'd rather have beaten Trinity at Nationals than at the Canada West championship," Kamdem added. "It was good for us to have lost at the West level because we really wanted those games back going into Nationals."

While every Alberta player relished the victory, the game had special meaning for Kamdem, who dedicated this game to his mother who passed away on 14 July. After he scored the winning goal, he lifted his jersey to reveal an undershirt with a tribute to his mother printed in black lettering.

"I told my teammates before the game that I was dedicating this game to my mother and father, and hoped to score today," Kamdem said emotionally. "I couldn't think of a better way to end my CIS career and to remember my mother."

Earlier in the day, in a bronze medal matchup that played out like a repeat of the Québec Student Sport Federation final, Montréal defeated Laval 4-1 to take third place. The Carabins were led by Pascal Aoun's two goals and dominated play despite being a man down for 80 minutes after a red card. The game was plagued with rough play as three reds were handed out—two to Montréal and one the Laval—and five more yellows.

SPORTS SHORTS

Written by Paul Owen

Bears Hockey

After downing the Regina Cougars in a pair of games at Clare Drake this past weekend, the Bears (8-1-1) get to brave the bus ride to Saskatoon to face off against the Saskatchewan Huskies (6-5-1). It's the first meeting of the year between the leaders of the two Canada West divisions.

Pandas Basketball

The female hoopsters will pay a visit to the East this weekend for games against the Regina Cougars and Brandon Bobcats. Alberta (3-1) will take on the two teams that sit at the bottom of the Great Plains division with 0-4 records. The Pandas are tied atop the Mountain division with Saskatchewan, who will play the same two teams this weekend, so the chance of gaining ground is very slim. The Pandas visit Regina on Friday and Brandon on Saturday.

Bears Basketball

The Bears (3-1) will match the Pandas travelling

schedule, but their competition should be a little stiffer, as the Bobcats have started the season 3-1 and are traditionally a tough squad.

Fantasy Hockey

Last week marked a shocking upset as I handed former league leader David Berry his first loss of the season. In an 8-2 drubbing that proved his goal-less strategy to be completely useless, I gained possession of top spot, ending Berry's 31 week reign of terror dating back to last season. In celebration, my team name has been changed to the innuendo-filled Berry Beaters for my upcoming matchup against Ross "the ecliptic pre-Madonna" Prusakowski, who is currently only two points back in the standings.

Shorts

Chloé and Natalie are going in opposite directions with their underwear today. Chloé's donning the lacy black thong, while Natalie is reliving her childhood through Care Bear underwear. I'm siding with Natalie today as I'm sporting some Scooby Doo themed boxers. Online Coordinator Mike Otto, disappointed about never being included, is continuing the sad tradition of male Gateway staffer sporting boxer-briefs by wearing a green pair with light and dark green stripes. He upsets me.



Open House – Cancer Research

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Time: 2:00-5:00 pm
Place: Rm 2279, 2nd floor, Cross Cancer Institute,
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JOSH NAULT

LEAVING THEM IN THE DUST Golden Bears striker Alex Campos (9) dribbles past a TWU defender en route to gold.

Bears prove golden at soccer nationals

ANDREW RENFREE
Sports Staff

The Spartans may have won the first battle, but the Bears won the war.

Eight days after the Trinity Western University men's soccer team handed the University of Alberta squad its first loss of the season, en route to the Canada West title, Alberta exacted revenge to capture the CIS gold medal with a 1-0 victory in front of a boisterous home crowd Sunday afternoon.

"I don't know what to say," Alberta midfielder Hilaire Kamdem, who scored the only goal of the match, said after the game. "You can't really describe the feeling of winning in front of your home fans."

"It was a battle between two great teams today," Spartans head coach Alan Alderson said, reflecting on the loss. "We knew it would be a tight match and that it might come down to one play that gave one team an

edge—that play went in Alberta's favour."

"It was a battle between two great teams today. We knew it would be a tight match and that it might come down to one play that gave one team an edge—that play went in Alberta's favour."

ALAN ALDERSON,
SPARTANS HEAD COACH

Both teams engaged in a defensive chess match from the opening whistle, but TWU controlled the play for most of the first half and mustered more offensive chances than Alberta. The Bears struggled to permeate

Trinity's solid defence, and only registered one shot on net in the first 45 minutes.

As the second half waned, Kamdem was awarded a free kick from 35 yards out in the 72nd minute. It was one of the few good chances Alberta had all match, and Kamdem made no mistake powering the ball past Spartans' keeper Tyler DeJong for the goal, sending Alberta fans and players into a frenzy. Kamdem's goal had its share of controversy however, as the officials didn't call a foul on an aggressive Alberta challenge seconds before, awarding the free kick to Kamdem. Alderson voiced his frustration with the circumstances that led up to the goal.

"It was frustrating to see the game won on a free kick," he said. "Knowing that most of Alberta's chances came on set-pieces today, there may have been some suspect calls that led up to those chances."

PLEASE SEE **CHAMPIONS** ♦ PAGE 19

Research debunks health-care myths

NATALIE CLIMENHAGA
Senior News Editor

The fear that with an aging population a publicly funded health-care system will no longer be sustainable is unfounded, according to research recently released by University of Alberta nursing professor Donna Wilson.

For a year Wilson, who also works as a Caritas Health Group researcher, studied data that had been routinely collected at Edmonton's Grey Nuns and Misrecordia hospitals from 1995 and extending into 2006. With the help of a computer programmer, she was able to identify high health-care users and to her surprise found seniors were the system's most infrequent users.

"We've got some real myths happening here, but what really struck me was how infrequently seniors use hospitals," Wilson said. "80 or even 90 per cent of the time, the people that are using hospitals are under the age of 65."

Wilson noted that the pattern was stable throughout the years she studied, leading her to believe the extent to which seniors use public

health services has been highly overemphasized.

"It's probably always been the case but for some reason we seem to notice seniors more in hospitals," she said. "We have this enormously powerful idea that when you get old you become ill and then you become a very high user of hospitals and other health services."

And according to Janet Fast from the U of A Department of Human Ecology, these preconceived notions of what people thought might be happening has been unsoundly driving policy changes.

"Policy markers have been considering the aging of the baby boom to be a bit of a disaster in terms of the health-care system," Fast said.

But Wilson noted the results of her research highlight the need for prior evidence supporting commonly held beliefs.

"I mean, for 15 years we've had a government saying we can't afford our health-care system because our seniors are such high users of the health ... [and] it's totally false, but that's a myth that we all believe," Wilson said.

PLEASE SEE **BOOMERS** ♦ PAGE 3

Wikipedia spinoff aims for open source credibility

RYAN HEISE
News Staff

The use of Wikipedia as an academic source by students has become a hotly contested issue on most North American campuses. While the information presented on the site is easily accessible and, at times, quite in-depth, its accuracy and fluidity have become sticking points in regards to academic integrity. In fact, it's not rare for the question of whether or not to use Wikipedia to arise in many classes here at the U of A—either by instructors or students.

Now, Wikipedia co-founder Larry Sanger is aiming to change this by creating Citizendium, a new fork of Wikipedia that attempts to make articles more accurate by soliciting the help of "experts" to write and edit content specific to their areas of knowledge. Users will also need to register with their full names and other information in order to edit content on the site.

"Wikipedia has accomplished great things, but the world can do even better," Sanger said in a press release, stating that through the inclusion of

"expert" editors, the elimination of anonymous contribution, and the inclusion of broader and more influential groups of people and institutions, they will be able to improve Wikipedia's "extremely useful," but "often uneven work."

However, while Sanger believes that Citizendium will usher in a new era of free and accurate information, others remain skeptical of the project's academic benefits.

"I have to say what they're trying to do is a good thing, but I think what they're doing is what Wikipedia should have been doing all along," said Deborah Eerkes, University of Alberta Director of the Office of Student Judicial Affairs, stating she is skeptical that Citizendium will create a legitimate source of academic knowledge, citing the fact that it's still open-sourced and editable.

"[T]here are still some of the same problems with Citizendium as there are with Wikipedia and that is that people can keep going on and keep changing the information. So it's a fluid information source—it's not stable," Eerkes affirmed.

PLEASE SEE **CITIZENDIUM** ♦ PAGE 2
ALSO READ **GAUMONT** ON PAGE 9

Inside

News	1-5
News Feature	6
Opinion	8-11
A&E	12-15
Le Miroir	16
Sports	17-19
Comics	20
Classifieds	20



Raising a band

Raising The Fawn doesn't bring up baby deer. No siree, Bob. Instead, they mother some awesome music.

A&E, PAGE 12

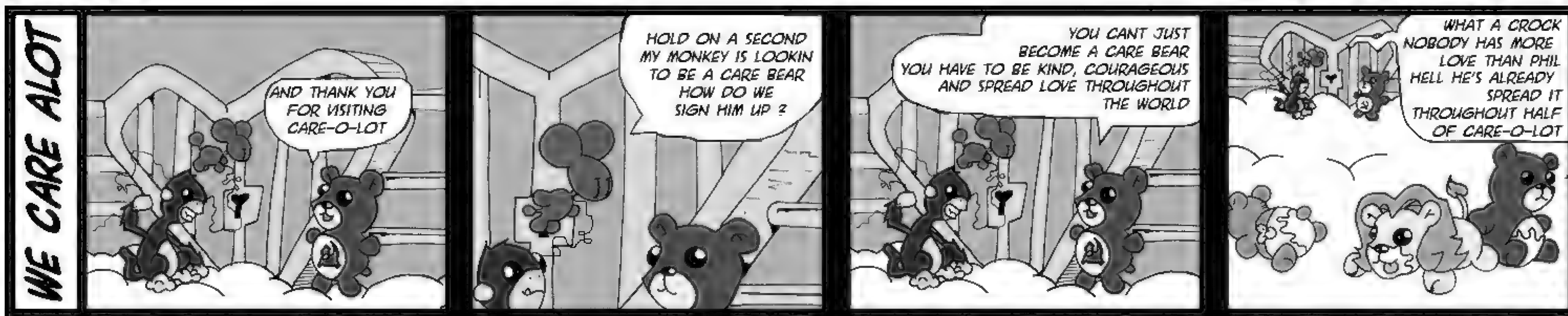


Oui oui, French is best

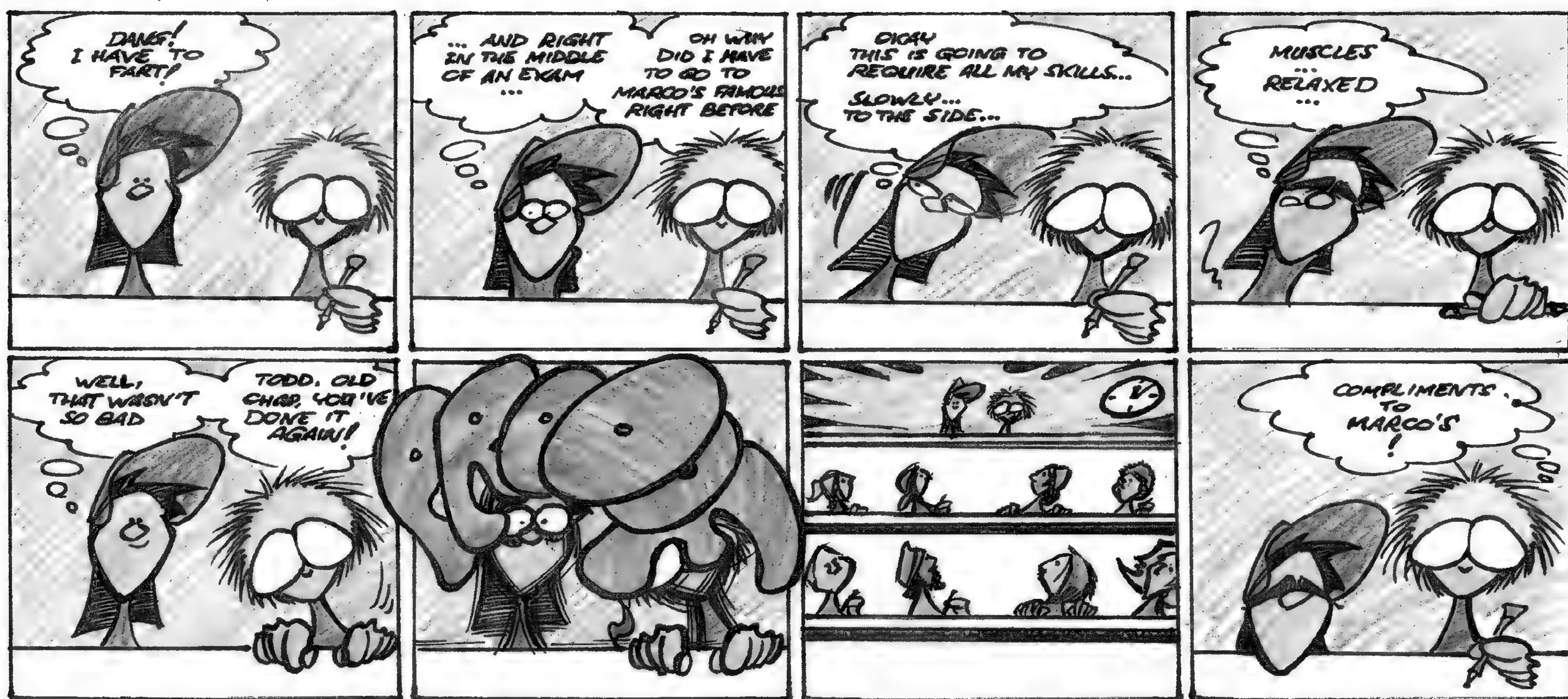
You've got your french fries, your french kisses, your french wine, and the uber-french *Le Miroir* one more.

LEMIROIR, PAGE 16

BLOWIE SHOW by Chris Jung



TOD & TODD by Sam Lacrampe



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AVALANCHE OF PANCAKES

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"Of the sacred desert sand
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He just can't wait to read my books-
Freddie is the smartest dog
and there won't be no more tests.
I feel so very guilty.
I wasted through the night.
I asked, "Why are you pinching me?
and a full-blown case of rapies.
I didn't wash the dishes.
Gory, gory ha ha ujan!
There won't be school no more.
If I don't get it off my chest
just think of the energy
I had nosepicks, measles, neat rash.
I didn't do my reading.
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Tory candidates talk gov't accountability

LIZ DURDEN
News Writer

Provincial Tory leadership hopefuls met Monday night at an all-candidates' forum, to answer questions posed by audience members—including the question of government responsibility. Each of the eight candidates was given the opportunity to answer the question of what they would do to demonstrate open and accountable government as premier of the province.

When leadership hopeful Gary McPherson was questioned how he would demonstrate open and accountable government as premier of the province, he called for the end to public information requests.

"I would probably get rid of the Freedom of Information Act, because it's only made governments more secretive," McPherson said, however he didn't elaborate further.

Alternately, Lyle Oberg felt that access to information was necessary to ensure accountability in government. He stood by his Blueprint for Alberta policy, in which he promises to place a cap on the premiers' time in office, as well as a whistleblowers' protection act and measures to hold accountable those MLAs who cross the floor.

"A whistleblowers' protection act

... access to information, ministerial travel, crossing the floor—all of these things have to have regulations to continue to have an open and accountable, transparent, credible government in Alberta," he said.

Fixed election dates and a ten-year term limit for premiers were mentioned by Ted Morton. He said that these measures would prevent premiers from being in office for extended periods of time.

In regards to accountability, Mark Norris went on the offensive by demanding that the other candidates release their list of campaign donors and sponsors, as he has done. To this challenge, one candidate, Victor Doerkson, replied that he had made a campaign promise to his donors not to reveal them until after the election.

Transparency with regard to lobby groups, including a lobbyist registry, was an idea proposed by Dave Hancock.

The winner of the leadership race will take over as premier until the next provincial elections. The election will take place November 25th, and while only Conservative party members are eligible to vote, memberships can be bought up to election day.

'Net expertise questioned

Critics say Citizendium isn't convincingly credible

CITIZENDIUM • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Amanda Henry, Students' Union Vice-President (Academic), echoed concerns surrounding the use of Citizendium as an academic source.

"I would still hesitate strongly about using [either Wikipedia or Citizendium] as source material. They may be able to eliminate some of the inaccuracies that people can say on Wikipedia ... but even if it's more accurate, it's still a changeable source."

"The problem is that these intellectuals are self-indentifying and who of us doesn't like to think that we're an intellectual? The open culture is the problem with this."

DEBORAH EERKES,
DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF
STUDENT JUDICIAL AFFAIRS

"[T]here is no way of verifying the research that went into the source or the methodology or even the reputation of the writer," Henry added.

Citizendium is considered a branch of Wikipedia, as it will use all of the

site's existing articles but perform the arduous process of editing them during a closed, invitation-only period. This is possible due to the fact that all content on Wikipedia is considered open-source under its licence. The procedure of mirroring articles from Wikipedia and editing them has recently begun by sending invitations to specialists as well as taking applications to be members of the community.

But a major area of contention that remains is that Sanger has yet to define what will constitute an "expert voice" in the Citizendium community.

"The problem is that these intellectuals are self-identifying and who of us doesn't like to think that we're an intellectual? The open culture is the problem with this," Eerkes said.

Both Eerkes and Henry agreed that not all Internet-based research is questionable, but that it must not replace more academic methods. Instead, they said, students should be using all of the resources provided to them by the University, including books, libraries resources and peer-reviewed journals.

"Internet sourcing is great and useful and convenient and an easy way to get a lot of information in a very short amount of time, but part of the point of a research paper is to teach students about research methods," Henry said. "I would really hate to see that lost."

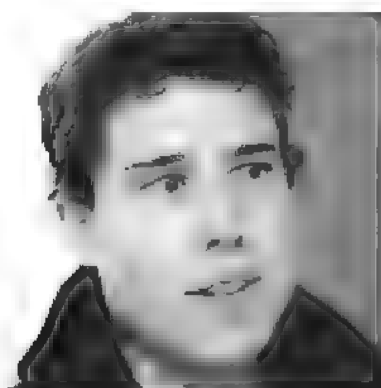
STREETERS

OJ Simpson's new book, *OJ Simpson: If I Did It, Here's How It Happened*, on how he would have committed the murders of Nicole Brown and Ronald Goldman, is being released on 30 November.

If you did it, how would it happen?



Amanda Duncan
Master's
Anthropology III



Alex Harcott
Arts II



Mike Rivest
Business IV



Chris Bourque
Engineering II

I don't think I would have done what he did. [Maybe] poison? Because it's not gory or horrible or bloody, you can just do away with them quickly and get rid of the evidence. I would have killed them as painlessly as possible.

I would have at least planned it out, made it seem less obvious. Some sort of accident, like from *Seinfeld*, when George's fiancée is poisoned [by licking the envelopes].

He got away with it didn't he? If he did do it, that's how I would have done it too.

I would have put something in the drink, and got her to drink it. Just snuck it in there without her seeing it. Something that would be slow and that you wouldn't notice it for a few days, until all of a sudden, [click noise], gone.

Compiled and photographed by Mike Otto and Matt Frehner



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Not all's sweet in cocoa industry: Off

CATHERINE SCOTT
News Writer

The second lecturer of this year's Revolutionary Speaker Series, Carol Off spoke to an attentive audience on 13 November at the Myer Horowitz Theatre about her most recent book, *Bitter Chocolate: Exploring the Dark Side of the World's Most Seductive Sweet*.

Off, a Canadian journalist and host of "As It Happens" on CBC, has done investigative and sometimes controversial journalism for years, and she was on campus Monday night to discuss her latest story: the use of child slave labour in the cocoa industry.

"I just want [everyone] to know what's going on," Off stated simply.

Every time Off looks at a chocolate bar, she says she sees the faces of child slaves. However, she doesn't want to ruin anyone's enjoyment of chocolate, she just wants to raise awareness.

As part of her research, Off interviewed several cocoa farmers and children who worked on farms in Africa, particularly in the Ivory Coast. Off found that, just as most North American children know little about where and how that chocolate bar was made, African children don't know what happens to the fruits of their labour.

"It's unthinkable ... [that African children] don't even know what we do with [the cocoa bean]," Off said with incredulity.

Off then spoke of the history of the chocolate bar. She told the audience about Milton Hershey, who started the well-known chocolate company to democratize chocolate; because, until just about the 20th century, chocolate wasn't widely available for the masses—only the wealthy Europeans had access to it.

"Only elites consumed [a liquid chocolate]," Off explained. According to Off, Hershey was one of the first men to make a five-cent chocolate bar.



ASHLEY SCARLETT

COCOA CORRUPTION Slave labour leaves a bad taste in Carol Off's mouth.

His employees were treated very well and with respect, but the cocoa he used came from slave labour.

"[Except, at that time] slavery was officially outlawed, which was replaced by an 'indentured labour system,'" Off said.

She also mentioned the Cadbury family, who were considered very revolutionary (they strongly opposed King Leopold's presence in the Congo). They knowingly got their cocoa from Angolan slaves, who worked so hard they were dying in the fields, Off said in her speech.

Off related the story of Henry Nevison, a well-respected journalist, who exposed the two sides to Cadbury chocolate. Before the situa-

tion could be looked into any further, Cadbury moved their operations to Ghana, where conditions were slightly better.

Today, however, Off explained that consumers have the option of buying fair trade chocolate. While this kind of chocolate may be more expensive, she says that the extra price is well worth it.

"[As consumers], we want cheap goods and we don't always face [the reality]," Off noted.

Finally, she encouraged citizen action as another option.

"I believe that we have more power as citizens than as consumers ... we need to pressure big chocolate ... this is unacceptable," she concluded.

Other medical myths may exist: Wilson

BOOMERS • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Fast, who has researched the costs associated with taking on care responsibilities for family members and friends outside of the formal system, noted there are other drivers of costs in the health-care system that are far more problematic than population aging—a sentiment echoed by spokesmen for Alberta Health and Wellness, Howard May, who pointed to factors such as extraordinarily expensive medical technologies and drug treatment.

Since the release of her research, Wilson said there has been an enormous amount of interest from government, other researchers across Canada, health-care planners and hospitals administrators asking her to share her report.

"People are planning to kind of duplicate this study across Canada to see [whether] this also happening in [their] province," Wilson explained, noting previously held American studies aren't relevant to apply to Canada's

very different health-care system.

And while Wilson's data was limited to Alberta, she suspects the results are similar to what would be found in any mid-sized-to-large Canadian hospital.

Wilson also noted that her research may shed light on to how easy it is to have myths driving policy changes, and explained most health-care data is left unanalyzed.

"We could have many other myths out there about who's using health-care," Wilson concluded.

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NEWS BRIEFS

Written by Jaskaran Singh

GIFT CREATES NEW CHAIR OF INDIA STUDIES AT UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Starting in September 2007, the University of Alberta will become one of the first postsecondary institutions in Canada to host a chair in classical Indian studies. The creation of the new program owes thanks to a \$1.5 million donation to the Faculty of Arts by the Singhmar family.

The Saroj and Prem Singhmar Chair in Classical Indian Polity and Society, named after the benefactors, was set up to study various aspects of ancient Indian culture, such as economics, philosophy, literature and arts.

"[From 500 BC to 500 AD] was when India was at its zenith. At this time India had contributed a lot to the world in terms of politics, society and education. If we have an understanding through academic pursuits, then we will increase more of an understanding to of India in the modern day," Prem Singhmar said.

The creation of this chair also includes the opening of four new positions in the study of ancient India.

"We are hoping to have people by the September session," Prem Singhmar said.

Of the 40 history professors present at the U of A, none teaches modern or historical India, according to Dean of

Arts Daniel Woolf. Two of the new positions are to occupy the Chair, with the other two being for junior academics: one to focus on philosophy and religion, and the other to focus on Indian economics. And if the four new positions are occupied, this will make the U of A the first university in Canada to teach the period of Indian history from 500 BC to 500 AD.

"We believe that this was a very important era for India, at this time the two big religions of India began, Buddhism and Jainism. There was a lot of work done in literature, the Mahabharata [a great Sanskrit epic of the Hindus] was completed in 1200 BC, and there were further improvements on the Upanishads [a series of Hindu sacred treatises]," Singhmar said.

STUDY FINDS PAINTERS MORE LIKELY TO HAVE KIDS WITH BIRTH DEFECTS

A recent study, done in co-operation with the University of Alberta, shows that heavy exposure to paint thinners and other aromatic solvents can lead birth defects in newborn children.

The study, conducted in the Netherlands by the University of Nijmegen with help from U of A researcher Dr Igor Burstyn, showed that painters are twice as likely to father children with birth defects than carpenters.

The results yielded by the survey didn't exhibit any dramatic or profound irregularities; however, there were slight indicators towards the detrimental effects of solvents, such



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: ERINNE FENWICK

PAINTING A GRIM PICTURE Research has found professional male painters are putting their future of spring at risk.

as decreased birth weight, and a slight increase in birth-defect rates for painters over carpenters.

"We saw an increase in congenital and all birth defects combined. These estimates are some very small numbers but we did see a doubling of risk for painters compared to carpenters," explained Burstyn, the only Canadian participant in the survey.

The study did warn that professional painters, who are exposed to solvents such as those found in industrial paints and thinners, are more at risk due to long-term contact with aromatic solvents.

However, there have been some questions of the validity of the research, and that there may be problems with the methodology used.


"We lumped them all together, and that's really one of the great weaknesses of the study. For example we had four cardiovascular malformations, two gastrointestinal, one of central nervous system, one eye malformation, and it was all kind of lumped together. These are fairly serious defects, but because we had so few people in the study we could not analyze them separately," Burstyn said.

According to Burstyn, this news shouldn't alarm aspiring artists, or recreational painters fearing that exposure to art materials is linked with this study.

"Generally people who paint recreationally would not get near the level of exposure, they wouldn't be exposed to it day in and day out, for hours and hours as construction workers are," Burstyn explained.

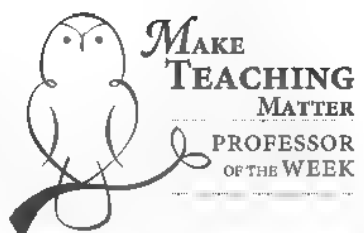
The research was funded in part by the Dutch Union for Construction Workers, according to Burstyn this narrowed the research to long term exposure to industrial strength solvents.

PROFESSOR OF THE WEEK



DR. AL MELDRUM

PHYSICS 114



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In order to ensure that studentcare.net/works can transfer your claims by the deadline, they must be dropped off at the GSA Office **no later than Tuesday, Nov. 21, 2006**. If you're mailing claims directly to the insurance company, please leave adequate time for delivery. The address for Sun Life is recorded on the back of all claim forms. Claims received after the deadline will not be reimbursed.

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U of M AIDS project in India gets American funding boost

JENELLE PETRINCHUK
The Manitoban

WINNIPEG (CUP)—The University of Manitoba will be taking an HIV/AIDS prevention program in India to the next level, thanks to a recent US\$22 million grant from the United States Agency for International Development.

The funding, to be provided over a five-year period, was officially announced 6 November and will provide the Enhance Karnataka program with resources for AIDS prevention, treatment services, and support.

The main role of the U of M's program in India is to educate people about HIV and improve clinical and counselling services as well as provide adequate condom distribution.

HIV and AIDS are quickly becoming serious issues in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh—two of India's most populated states, with a combined population of more than 110 million. Although in some areas the official infection rate is less than one per cent, experts say other areas have an infection rate of more than five per cent.

James Blanchard, a U of M departments of community health sciences and medical microbiology associate professor, explained the high level of fear and misunderstanding in relation to the disease in the project's areas of focus.

"It was not uncommon to hear that people living with HIV and AIDS had been ostracized from the village and kept in a shed. So our first agenda was to rapidly disseminate correct information about HIV and AIDS," Blanchard, who is also the senior technical adviser for the current project in India, said via e-mail.

According to John O'Neil, U of M's head of community health sciences, the new grant will allow an expansion of HIV prevention programs in southern India that have been running for more than five years.

Although the project doesn't differ

greatly from prevention projects in the past, Blanchard recognizes three ways in which Enhance Karnataka is original: the building of a strong information base, the focus on targeting the affected communities (including female sex-workers) and the fact that they're working closely with government agencies at all stages, including the Karnataka state government.

"It was not uncommon to hear that people living with HIV and AIDS had been ostracized from the village and kept in a shed. So our first agenda was to rapidly disseminate correct information about HIV and AIDS."

**JAMES BLANCHARD,
SENIOR TECHNICAL ADVISOR,
ENHANCE KARNATAKA PROJECT**

And, according to Blanchard, the results are already apparent.

"Very quickly we saw that the level of stigma and discrimination decreased and in many families and villages there was relief that they could care for those living with HIV and AIDS without fear," Blanchard said.

To a certain degree, Enhance Karnataka is modelled after a U of M AIDS program launched in Kenya in the 1980s, and according to O'Neil, this is one of the reasons why U of M was chosen to receive the money.

"We have established a reputation in India over the last five years, beginning with a project funded from the Canadian government and then expanding with funding from the Bill

and Melinda Gates Foundation," he said.

In 2000, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) funded the program with \$12.5 million but withdrew its support in 2005 when the Indian government limited aid from other nations. The program then received \$17 million in funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

"I think I can fairly say that the government of India and most of the people with different organizations in India working on HIV prevention regard the University of Manitoba as the lead organization in the country when it comes to having expertise in HIV/AIDS prevention," O'Neil said.

Although the infected regions in India aren't as severely or visibly affected as the more widely known epidemic in Africa, Blanchard pointed out that there are still districts in which the problem is quite severe.

"It's important to note that in India a single district has the same population as Botswana," he said.

According to Blanchard, support will be provided for about 9000 sex-workers (a group that consumes about 10–15 per cent of the project's focus), something the project believes will prevent thousands of infections in itself.

The new grant also allows for the expansion of assistance across rural areas that weren't previously reached.

And although the results cannot be predicted, Blanchard hopes that the five-year program will aid in the construction of "longer-term institutional capacities" in southern India that will continue to build on the foundation provided by the U of M's program.

"I see the University of Manitoba continuing to play a key technical role in assisting in the design and implementation of effective programs, and disseminating the knowledge that we and our teams have gained to the wider public health community," Blanchard said.

Six Nations, McGill clash over debt

JESSE ROSENFELD AND
MARTIN LUKACS
The McGill Daily

MONTREAL (CUP)—McGill University owes the Six Nations people \$1.7 billion to square an outstanding debt from 1860, say representatives for the Southern Ontario community.

In the 1850s, McGill was near bankruptcy, took out a \$40 000 loan from the Province of Canada in 1860. According to the Six Nations, \$8000 of that came from the Six Nations Trust Fund—money held in trust by the colonial government for the Six Nations community near Caledonia in return for land it had taken. That money, the Six Nations say, was never paid back.

In 1989, members of Six Nations alerted both McGill and the federal government of the outstanding debt—over \$1.7 billion with interest.

The Six Nations of the Grand River Territory is home to more than 21 000 people from six First Nations: the Mohawk, Cayuga, Tuscarora, Oneida, Onondaga and Seneca.

According to Philip Montour, a private consultant who worked with the Six Nations in 1989, the McGill Administration didn't acknowledge the debt at a subsequent meeting

with Six Nations representatives in the early 1990s.

"We had a meeting with the Administration. They had lots of lawyers around them, advising them to admit nothing," Montour said.

"We were willing to be proactive, to offer a good solution so that McGill could redeem themselves and the debt," he continued, citing increased scholarships and support for Six Nations students at McGill as possible solutions.

However Jennifer Robinson, Vice-Principal of communications at McGill, maintained that there's no evidence of an outstanding debt in McGill's records, and called the claim "unfounded."

She said McGill settled its debts with the federal government in 1873, adding that, if any of the loaned money was supplied by the Six Nations Trust Fund, it wasn't made clear.

"If there was a relationship between this money and Native tribes or nations in Ontario, as alleged, it was not clear at the time, and remains unclear today," she wrote in an e-mail to the *McGill Daily* newspaper.

Michael Doxtater—director of indigenous studies, education and research in McGill's Faculty of Education and a member of the Six

Nations committee that met with the University during the 1990s—also said McGill has never repaid or acknowledged the debt that Six Nations feels that it is owed.

"The response at the time was, 'We don't know where the money came from—if the government got it from you guys, then your problem is not with us,'" Doxtater said.

Doxtater further argued that while the Six Nations didn't want McGill University to pay the entire \$1.7 billion sum immediately, the University has the responsibility to provide restitution.

"We don't want all the money at once, but don't kid us that there isn't money in the bank when we need [an indigenous studies degree] or funding for Six Nations students to attend the University," he said.

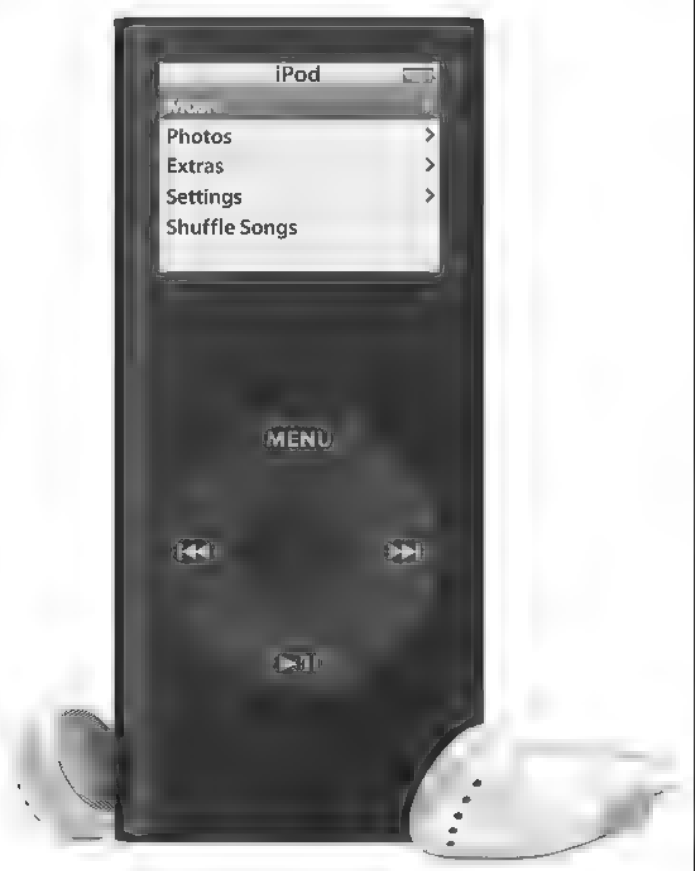
He suggested that McGill look to upstate New York's Syracuse University where the "Haudenosaunee Promise" acknowledges that Syracuse University is constructed on Iroquois land, and, beginning this year, the University will cover the full cost of education for its Iroquois students.

But Robinson said that since the University hasn't acknowledged the Six Nations' claim, it hasn't considered adopting a restitution program like that of Syracuse University.

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Overlooking the quadrangle of green space in the heart of campus, Pembina Hall has been a central part of the University of Alberta since 1914. Along with its sister structures Athabasca and Assiniboia, the former residence has weathered the changing campus. During Pembina's illustrious career as a dormitory, the building housed victims of the influenza epidemic in 1918, injured

Royal Canadian Air Force soldiers during World War II, as well as thousands of undergraduate and graduate students. Threatened with demolition in 1974 and a fire in 1999, the structure now serves as academic space. Upon entering the stately building, the oak walls and marble floors evoke a time before the University landscape was filled with laptop-toting students or corporate sponsorship.

The halls, they are a-changin'

Grads pine for new home as Pembina makes shift to office space

Written by Elizabeth McMillan

Photos by Andrew Rurak

If Pembina Hall's walls could talk, they'd relate almost a century of late-night study sessions, early morning treks to class, gossip, heartbreak and scandals. Traditionally home to female students, Pembina Hall became a coed residence primarily for mature students in 1974. And although the historic building is still listed on the online U of A campus map as "mature students' residence," students haven't called it home since they were evicted in August 2005 so that the building could be turned into office space. It's now home to the Faculty of Native Studies, and renovations are in progress to accommodate the Department of East Asian Studies and the Canadian Institute for Ukrainian Studies in the coming months.

According to Kristie Baillie, in charge of recruitment and external relations for the Faculty of Native Studies, renovations to Pembina Hall are almost complete and "not too much was done in terms of changing the fit of the building." Native Studies moved into the first and second floors of Pembina in August 2006.

University Architect Len Rodrigues describes the Pembina renovations as a "pretty standard project." There was no cooling or natural ventilation, and an elevator had to be installed to ensure universal access. Renovations included installing lighting, creating the front reception area and painting. The building was also abated for asbestos.

When the motion was first approved to convert Pembina Hall to academic space, the focus was on moving the departments in as soon as possible. What followed was a year of construction. Rodrigues explained the perceived delay occurred because it took time to assess what needed to be done, prepare requests for proposals and select contractors. He called the process "time consuming" and stressed that opening Pembina as office space in the fall of 2005 was never feasible.

"The intent was to get work underway," he states.

Rodrigues notes further that until gaining access to Pembina Hall after students moved out, it wasn't known what changes were necessary. The Pembina assessment required "walking through every part [of the building], which would have been an intrusion on residents."

The first and second floor renovation project took roughly twelve months and renovations on the other floor are ongoing, even as Native Studies occupies the building. Rodrigues couldn't confirm when the building would be ready for the Department of East Asian Studies and the Canadian Institute for Ukrainian Studies.

"The major issue is not to disrupt our friends who are in the building," he says.

While the character of Pembina Hall remains, what once were residence rooms now provide office spaces to the 30 employees working on the first two floors. Closets conveniently hide filing cabinets and the large windows offer the perfect view of campus.

The building offers new opportunities for Native Studies students and professors alike. The faculty now has adequate room for a boardroom, an elders/student lounge and classroom space for the Cree language program. A visitor wouldn't realize that computer labs were once laundry rooms.

While the University Administration is celebrating the installation of the Faculty of Native Studies in its new, permanent home, it wasn't too long ago that Pembina Hall was literally a home to many.

PhD student Andrea Dalton has fond memories of living in Pembina, describing it as "a wonderfully insulated community."

"The beauty of Pembina Hall was that it had the perfect design for residence community building. Everyone congregated in the central hall, and it was impossible not to know people," recalls Dalton, who lived there during the 2004/05 school year.

Dalton feels the benefits of a graduate student residence went beyond the convenient location. "Getting to know people from other departments is so invaluable for grad students," she noted, explaining that this social interaction gave her "an awareness of what goes on at this university in graduate and research work."

In March 2005, students living in Pembina Hall protested the unexpected announcement that the building would be converted the following September. Current residents had already received confirmation notices from Residence Services that there was a room available for them that fall.

Residents upset about the proposed closure began a counterstrike and gathered a petition of 1500 signatures. Their protest culminated in a presentation made to the Facilities Development Committee (FDC) of the General Faculties Council on 22 April, 2005. With three student representatives on the committee voting against it, the decision wasn't unanimous, but the FDC approved a motion to convert Pembina Hall into academic space.

"It makes sense from the University's perspective," says Alan Gill, who was at the April 22 meeting and is currently undergraduate representative on the FDC. "The problem I had with Pembina was that they did it on such short notice. It could have been handled better."

"The biggest tragedy isn't so much that we lost that specific space. It's that grad students don't have anything now," Dalton added.

While graduate students are currently eligible for residence room in Newton Place, HUB, Michener Park and East Campus Village, many graduate student choose not to live amongst undergraduates.

Christel Dahlberg, a first-year Masters student, lives in HUB. While she's pleased with her apartment she feels a sense of graduate community is missing. A graduate residence, she says, would offer "a wider circle of friends doing the same sort of work in different fields."

"The sad thing is that we're really isolated in our own department. I might have a lot in common with someone in Medieval History, but it's really difficult meeting other people in other disciplines," she comments.

MA student Tiffany O'Hearn also expresses concerns. "The University should really look into having more accessible housing that reduces the stress of moving. With so many programs being a year or two, it would be a big advantage to offer housing if they're hoping to attract students from across the country," she says.

Rodrigues suggests the northeast area of campus is the "obvious place" for a graduate residence. "We're seriously looking into building a grad residence sooner than later," he adds, noting that first the University needs to research development in that area.

Dalton agrees that having a residence community for graduate students is crucial if the U of A intends to continue expanding its graduate programs.

"The value of Pembina Hall as a draw for grad students should not be underestimated," she added.

Pembina Hall's conversion is part of a larger issue on campus that has seen academic departments scrambling for office and administrative space. Graduate students across disciplines feel the effects as they share crowded offices.

Rodrigues suggested that while expanding the core campus isn't possible, downtown development will help with the problem.

"There is a huge issue with space. We don't have enough to meet faculties teaching and research needs. There is considerable shortfall," he says. "Enterprise Square will help the backfill and free up some space on campus."





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This just in: Comedy Network the new CNN

THE TRUE EFFECTS OF LAST WEEK'S MID-TERM elections in the United States won't be apparent for a number of months, but the resignation of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld might very well be a harbinger of sweeping change to come—and not only in the political arena.

Around midnight on election day, 7 November, news began to circulate that at the next day's 1pm White House press conference George Bush would announce Rumsfeld's stepping down. Not really a surprising development, considering the solid ass-whopping the Democrats handed to the GOP—though Bush *did* pronounce his unwavering support for Rummy not a week earlier. What did turn a few heads, though, is how the story broke: not through the Associated Press, ABC, CNN or NBC, but on the Comedy Network's political blog. That's right: a network dedicated to satirizing US politics apparently scooped the biggest story of the congressional mid-terms.

This is a network whose flagship "news" show, *The Colbert Report*, spent a substantial amount of airtime this week discussing Stephen Colbert's errant pet eagle, as well as new womb-transplant technologies that, Colbert claimed, would make it possible for pro-life Republican males to give birth, saving the lives of frozen embryos destined for scientific experimentation.

Satire aside, though, the *Report*, along with Jon Stewart's *The Daily Show*, are becoming staples in the news diets of many left-leaning Americans. Stewart's election coverage brings in substantial viewing numbers, and their posted results are no less reliable or timely than that of the major networks.

Depending on one's point of view—and political stripes—this is either a welcomed development or entirely sacrilegious. That a comedy channel is relied upon for one's news speaks to the deficit of balance in US television; that such a network (and its blog) can break a major news story in US politics, while all media eyes are on the White House and Congress, is a bit unnerving.

Never mind that this doesn't bode well for media accountability, as it's not like we can (or should) hold a comedy to the same bar as the CNN broadcast it's lampooning. I'm just waiting for the day Stewart announces the Canadian invasion of the US, and American liberals everywhere respond by burning Maple Leafs and using "freedom syrup" on their hotcakes.

What should come out in the mid-term wash is a clear signal to the powers at FOX, CNN et al that something needs to change about the way they do business. It's depressingly obvious that TV news—now including the Comedy Network—acts not simply to report, but to polarize an already dangerously partisan America, entrenching people's personal biases rather than opening their minds. Stewart and Colbert can get away with wearing their views on their sleeves because of their shows' faux-news and satire formats. But for the rest of TV media, who seem to be making politics their business, partisan coverage only stokes the fire rather than checking the flames of a divided government and nation.

MATT FREHNER
Editor-in-Chief

The Juice is milking it

A CASH-STRAPPED OJ SIMPSON IS WRITING A tell-all book tentatively titled *OJ Simpson: If I Did It, Here's How It Happened*. Now, obviously the guy needs some form of income after the Goldmans and Browns took all his money in the civil suit—and are still owed a vast amount of the \$33.5 million they were awarded—but for a guy who's often referred to as getting away with murder, writing a book about how he would have committed the murders had he been the one to do so is coming dangerously close to an admission of guilt. Maybe the title of the book should be *If I Did It ... Aww Sheeit, Who Am I Kidding?*

PAUL OWEN
Sports Editor



MIKE KENDRICK

LETTERS

Anti-tuition mission won't come to fruition

I'm so sick of hearing students on campus bitch and complain about rising tuition fees and the Alberta government's refusal to do everything for them. Ideas are free, degrees are not. I believe that it is not a *right* to attend a postsecondary institution, but a *privilege*. Not a privilege that is reserved for those who can afford it, but a privilege to those who have evaluated the costs of obtaining a degree and decided that having said degree is worth the investment.

If you are currently attending the U of A and don't believe that your time and money are worth the end result, that's fine with me. But if you show up everyday and hang out in SUB whining because your life decisions aren't backed by provincial money, you are not only wasting your time, but also the breath you used to waste everyone else's.

Yes, Alberta has experienced an economic upswing, but that does not entitle any Joe Blow to attend a postsecondary institution for free. Last time I checked, the library was still cheap; if you desire further knowledge on a certain topic, sign out a book. If you desire a degree, you must acquire one at a cost. If everyone was entitled to admission at postsecondary institutions free of charge, they might as well print undergrad degrees on rolls of toilet paper because that's what it would be worth. Then the best jobs would go to Masters students, which would require more money and effort and students would probably complain about that too.

At no other time in history have people had such extensive access to higher education, and yet no other

generation has had more of a "the world owes me" attitude. Do you know what the quality of your degree would cost in the US or overseas? Next time you sign a brick or write a letter or article complaining about how everyone else should do everything for you, think about your reasons for being here in the first place.

Personally, I plan on taking advantage of the state of Alberta's economy in a different way, by getting a great job and saving thousands on taxes, not wasting my time petitioning for a couple hundred bucks on tuition.

KYLE MOLZAN
Engineering IV

Another Gateway issue, another cardinal rule of journalism broken

I realize that Kelsey Tanasiuk's article "Don't look at all the lovely people" (7 November) is suppose to be a farce, but maybe the *Gateway* should be saving this stuff for the sex issue, or better yet, the infamous joke issue (I actually did doublecheck the front page to make sure it didn't read *The Getaway*). In the meantime, this article is just taking up space in an opinion section that might be worth reading. Was there any purpose to the article other than to fill the lower half of page 6? All this shows is that the *Gateway* has run out of real opinions to print.

BRAD RICHERT
Philosophy & Religious Studies IV

Poppies aren't pro-war

In regards to your poppy article (re: "Pay Poppy its due," 9 November), I have to take issue with something: namely, alternatives to the traditional red poppies.

While I understand not everyone

is open to wars, if you look at the three wars (excluding Afghanistan) Canada has fought: offensively, it's not even a question of having an alternative to war. World War I: Canada's foreign policy was under Britain's control. So when Britain chose to go to War, Canada was going whether they liked it or not. World War II: There was *no* alternative! Appeasement didn't work. The only option left was war. The Korean War: It was a United Nations-sanctioned war!

That speaks for itself, people. We place so much emphasis, today, on the UN to back any conflicts in the world (eg Iraq) yet we ignore the ones from our past. For veterans, it's a slap in the face to wear an alternative to the red poppy. Canada had 206 200 casualties (dead/wounded) in World War I, 92 000 casualties in World War II, and 1400 casualties in Korea. It's just a shame that Canadians these days have lost touch with their history and the proud Canadian military tradition that once was. As sad as it sounds, a benefit of the current situation in Afghanistan is that younger generations of Canadians aren't losing touch with our military—unlike our ungrateful generation—and the sacrifices they've made over the last hundred years so that we can be here today.

The red poppy shows respect for the soldiers, *not* support for war—past or present. Ironically enough, it's the same soldiers that fought for individual Canadians' freedom, so that one day those Canadians could turn around and be disrespectful and wear these ignorant white and black poppies. So, I ask you, University of Alberta students, to not just wear your poppy the week before Remembrance Day and forget about our soldiers, but to wear red every Friday to support them. No matter [what] your stance in politics or on the war, our soldiers are fighting so

you have the freedom to disagree, and that's something we should always remember.

ALEX HAMILTON
History II

Aladdin article rubs writer the wrong way

In Scott C. Bourgeois' article about Bret Hart and *Aladdin* (re: "An unusual change of Hart," 9 November), [he] stated: "The Toronto show had been so successful that the show's writer, Ross Petty, approached Hart with the prospect of going on tour."

Mr Petty is not the show's writer. He is the Producer. The Writer is David Finley—myself, in fact.

DAVID FINLEY
Via e-mail

'Christ Jung' typo no Freudian slip

As a long time *Gateway* reader I am no stranger to the filth you regularly print in your so-called comics section. As such, I was extremely appalled when I noticed that the author of *The Blowie Show* was credited as "Christ Jung" in the contributors list on the second page of the 9 November issue of the *Gateway*.

While I realize that this unfortunate incident is more than likely the product of a simple typo (assuming Jung wasn't directly responsible for the "mistake"), it is extremely surprising that your editors were so blind as to allow the most depraved of your volunteers to be associated with our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is the savior of mankind, and none of us would be here today if it weren't for his incredible sacrifice.

To see the person responsible for that disgusting trash credited as the son of God literally made me sick.

PLEASE SEE LETTERS • PAGE 10

Citizendium is citizendumb



ADAM GAUMONT

In response to admittedly deserved criticism regarding its quality and reliability, the Wikimedia Foundation has announced that it will be launching Citizendium, a new branch of Wikipedia that will be expert-written as opposed to the current free-for-all format. At this point, it seems almost too obvious to wax philosophic on the merits of Wikipedia, but the infamous online resource is only five years old—a testament to the blinding speed at which the world of information technology changes.

However, although it may be unreliable in some cases, Wikipedia is still extremely accurate—and, in a sense, expertly written as well. There are two main concepts that explain how and why Wikipedia works the way it does: the first is the “Delphi Effect,” whereby, in the words of computer-culture theorist Eric Raymond, “the averaged opinion of a mass of equally expert (or equally ignorant) observers is quite a bit more reliable a predictor than the opinion of a single randomly chosen one of the observers.”

As proof of this, a recent study by the science journal *Nature* found that, comparing similar scientific articles in Wikipedia and *Encyclopædia Britannica* side by side, each resource had the same average amount of errors per article—and in that sense, that the two were equal in reliability. And while this served to debunk the canonical *Encyclopædia*’s claim to perfection as much as it boosts that of its online rival, the point was made nonetheless.

The other basic tenet of Wikipedia—and the reason why it vastly outperforms all other reference sources in terms of breadth, growth and accuracy—is that of open-source development, a movement that has its origins in the early days of computer hacking. This theory holds that non-proprietary software whose code (or in this case, information) is developed and reviewed by a maximal number of users will produce the most robust, reliable and adaptable end-product.

Of course, the likelihood of intellectual vandalism depends largely on the the likelihood that it will be in someone’s interest, political or otherwise, to alter or misrepresent a given bit of information.

Humans have long dreamed of amassing all the world’s knowledge, from the library of Alexandria to the French *Encyclopédie*. But no amount of *gens des lettres* will be able to accomplish this feat; it’s only with a massive, vibrant and adaptive effort from damn near everyone that we can even come close. To take away this maximal number of users and reduce it to a few hand-picked experts will therefore only grind Wikipedia’s currently steady informational march to a halt.

Apart from over-anxious developers, then, the potentially fatal flaw of Wikipedia is not a lack of accuracy; rather, it’s the relative ease with which the site can be abused, tampered with, and otherwise vandalized. After all, if

anyone with an Internet connection and a bit of online know-how can edit it, then even if only one per cent of all users were malicious, that would still be 10 000 vandals out of one million.

Of course, the likelihood of intellectual vandalism depends largely on the the likelihood that it will be in someone’s interest, political or otherwise, to alter or misrepresent a given bit of information. Looking for some technical specifications or mathematical formulae? Wikipedia would be a great place to start. Writing a paper on US foreign policy or stem-cell research? Well, you’d best steer clear of the Internet in general, to be honest.

But Citizendium won’t be an adequate replacement. Although being expert-written seems, on the surface, to be more scholarly and reliable, such a service would merely be caught between the traditional, tight-knit encyclopedia form and its sprawling online counterpart. Even if Citizendium were equally expert as an established reference work, it would just be one amongst several—though free, which would be its chief advantage—and never quite able to shake off the stigma of its embattled literary appendix. And as nearly every postsecondary instructor will tell you, Wikipedia ought not to be used as one’s sole academic reference anyway. It’s difficult to believe that this consensus will be quick to change even if this cleaner, more sterile version is introduced.

The solution, then, is not to abandon Wikipedia’s open-edit format, but to improve its security. The user-account system is a good start (though it’s still pretty soft), and the various disclaimers and lock-downs are actually quite effective. Add in a few more measures to detect the identity of the digital neanderthals and ne’er-dowells out there, and Wikipedia can be a brilliant, reliable and all-encompassing resource for years to come.

Cod crisis helps piece together fish puzzle



GRAHAM LETTNER

“In retrospect, the mistake made is certain: an inability to comprehend long-term consequences resulted in environmental collapse drastically affecting biological geography and, in turn, human geography. As a result, an entire maritime way of life has been disrupted for a generation—and the future is uncertain.”

Last week, a research team led by Dr Boris Worm from Dalhousie University published a report in the journal *Science* that outlined the accelerating degradation of global fish stocks. Alarming, Worm’s research concludes that nearly one third of global sea fisheries populations have already collapsed—and the rate of decline is still accelerating. In order to grasp the seriousness of this matter, you should know that the term “collapse” is defined as a fishery’s decline to less than ten per cent of original yields.

In 1992, Canada’s federal government declared a moratorium on cod fishing. By this point, cod stocks had plummeted to one per cent of 1960 levels. The fallout from the cods’ collapse was 30 000 people out of work and a stark cultural change for Newfoundlanders. A staple industry for 500 years had been in effect wiped out. In 2002 the mayor of Bonavista, a small fishing town of 4000 reported a permanent emigration of 700–900 people, consisting largely of ex-fishermen who, as it turned out, couldn’t earn enough money to send back to their families.

By 2002, ten years after the moratorium, cod stocks still hadn’t

recovered. The Grand Banks’ cod population has remained at less than five per cent of its 1960 biomass. In retrospect, the mistake made is certain: an inability to comprehend long-term consequences resulted in environmental collapse drastically affecting biological geography and, in turn, human geography. As a result, an entire maritime way of life has been disrupted for a generation—and the future is uncertain.

Yet the current global scenario reported by Worm is much more alarming than Newfoundland’s past misfortune. Despite large boats, better nets and improved technology, global catch declined by 13 per cent from 1994–2003. If current over-fishing practices continue, it’s predicted that by the middle of this century the last currently eaten seafood species will be depleted. Newfoundland history shows us that *ad hoc* action is no remedy. Repopulation of fish stocks isn’t a linear prospect: in ten years an ecosystem cannot recover from near extinction. Clearly reactive action is senseless; what’s needed is prevention.

So the question becomes simple: can lessons be learnt from past mistakes,

behaviors changed, and future disasters prevented? The answer is uncertain, but I will venture that the answer is no. Fishermen continue to dispute the claims of scientists because they are still able to catch large quantities of fish.

I account this shortsightedness to the human inability to comprehend complex systems. Cod stocks don’t decrease at a steady rate—rather, fish populations that are pushed to the edge of survival eventually tumble precipitously. In fact, under great environmental pressure, fish populations will cluster in ever greater densities—what scientists call hyper-aggregating—which could account for current high-level fish yields.

As a result, expect international governments to resist calls for complete fish bans, and expect the ensuing global collapse in fish stocks. What’s more—and more troubling—expect to see the same tragic changes to Newfoundland’s human geography played out on a global scale as fishing communities find themselves with no catch and no livelihood. And finally, expect Dr Boris Worm to have a footnote in history as another scientist whose warnings went unheeded.

OUR WEEKLY LINEUP

Mini Burger Mondays:
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